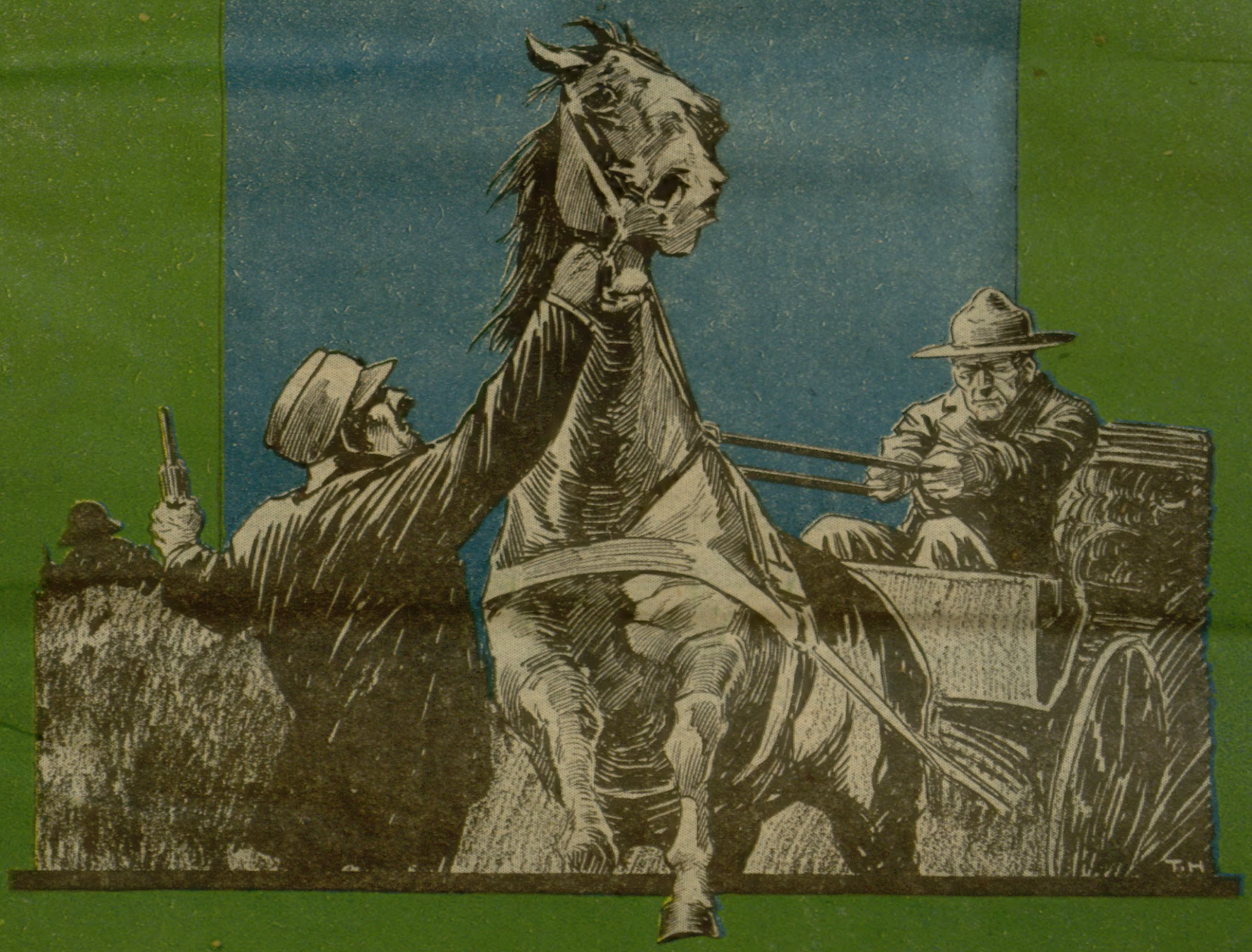
CHICAGO LEDGER

VOL. XLVI. NO. 39. CHICAGO, ILL., SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 28, 1918 5 CENTS A COPY.

The HEAD OF ADAM

BY

VICTOR ARDMORE



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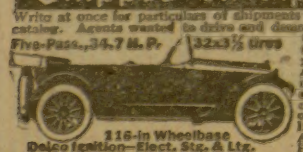

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Mrs. Pickett's Chaperone

By George Haskell

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IT WAS getting to be a joke in their set that Mrs. Pickett, the gay widow, kept her young niece for a chaperone. True, Helen Bryant, who had come to live with her aunt, was more quiet in manner and less given to gorgeous apparel, but it was not in the least her intention to keep an eye on her relative, whom she believed entirely capable of taking care of herself, and whose brilliant conversation and witty repartee was as much a delight to her as to any of Mrs. Pickett's admirers.

Helen's conversational gift took a slightly different trend. She had also a ready wit, but she had, too, sentiment and imagination. Her poems were beginning to find their way into the best magazines and she often found reading and study more alluring than bridge parties or teas. So sometimes when they asked Mrs. Pickett where her chaperone was she would laugh and say she was being shockingly neglected and who could tell where such carelessness would end. People who only met Helen in company with her aunt never really knew the girl, for Mrs. Pickett was the dominant individual who took the conversational field and kept it. Not that she meant to do this, but she was simply bubbling with wit and good humor and had to effervesce. Naturally Helen did not, under these circumstances, shine.

He Recognized Her and Waited.

About six months after Helen came to live with her aunt Wade Barber came out of the West with his pictures. He had some letters of introduction to "good people," and these, together with a well-bred manner, soon established him in social circles. He gave an exhibition of his pictures, which were really good, and sold some. Mrs. Pickett invited him to call, and very soon he was paying assidious attention to the witty widow.

"She must be all of fifteen years older than he is," said Mrs. Catt. "Why, he doesn't look a day over 25."

"My dear," put in Mrs. Spaniel, "he must be near 30, and Ethel Pickett can't be a day over 40. Besides, men of brains, poets and artists never think about age; it's the mind and soul that appeals to them."

"Anyway," purred the other, "no one these days makes any account of the woman being older than the man. I suppose, too, it would be a pretty good thing for Wade Barber. He's as poor as a church mouse, I hear; and Mrs. Pickett has plenty of money."

"He was speaking of Helen Bryant the other day to Miss Flint, and I heard her tell him the niece was a 'poor relation.'"

"That will finish things for Helen," grinned Mrs. Catt.

Whether or not Miss Flint had really had this decisive effect, it was very apparent that Wade Barber was devotion itself to the widow. Helen, feeling herself very much in the way, always promptly left the room when he called, and Mrs. Pickett did not insist on her remaining.

One day Helen went into a Fifth avenue picture dealer's, where two or three of Barber's pictures were hung. She liked his work, and she wanted the time to study these alone quietly. One held her motionless, entranced. A young nymph came dancing down thru a maze of apple blooms. Her floating hair seemed to catch at the blossoms and bring them with her. Her feet scarcely touched the young grass, and the blue of her eyes was luminous like the sky. It was the very poetry of spring. The glory of it drew Helen's soul to the artist who had created the poem.

So engrossed was she that she did not know a man in the doorway had been watching her a long time. At first he was only curious to know who it was that was interested in the picture. He recognized her and waited. She stood so long before the canvas, he felt the thrill which every artist must when his work is loved. She drew him to her. He went up to the girl. She turned and saw Wade Barber.

"You like it?" he said.

"Like it?" she answered. "That is not the word. It is too wonderful, too splendid a vision—to tell you just now what I feel."

"Your eyes tell me," he said. "It is enough. I never had just such appreciation before."

They sat down and began talking together. What came to both of these souls suddenly revealed to each other must lie with themselves, but what their faces revealed was much.

The lights went up in the gallery.

"Oh!" exclaimed Helen with a quick realization of the time. "Aunt Ethel will be waiting dinner!"

"She will not scold, will she?"

"Never!" cried Helen. "Aunt Ethel is a darling! I am so glad you like her!"

Quite unexpectedly to herself she was finding it hard to finish the sentence.

"Yes, she is a charming, beautiful woman."

Helen had never heard her aunt called beautiful before. "Only a lover could say that," she thought.

"Don't run away the next time I come," he said as they parted.

True to her promise, Helen did not "run away," but Mrs. Pickett engrossed the young man's attention, sporadic attempts at conversation between him and Helen seemed to be nipped in the bud, the girl began to be sure she was simply being endured, and excused herself.

In the quiet of her own room she had a battle to fight. She knew now that she loved this man. She also knew he loved her aunt, and felt for her only a friendly interest. What was more, she was convinced that her aunt loved him. Even if she could have succeeded in supplanting any one in his affections, that one must not be the one who had been to her such a friend. Generally when they went to the opera she was one of the party, but the next time, she pleaded an excuse. It was best for her not to see him.

Things went on this way for several weeks, then his visits ceased entirely. Helen supposed he must be out of town, but as her aunt offered no explanation, she did not ask. One day she met Barber at a reception. He drew her into a quiet corner and they had a talk. Finally she got up courage to ask him why he had deserted them. He begged her to let him answer her question some other time, where they would not be interrupted. It was out of the question for him to call, so they arranged to meet the next day in the park.

Helen felt something like a traitor as she started out; but it was spring in the park—she had not known it before amidst the brick and stone—the grass and sky looked like his picture. He was waiting and they found a seat in a quiet place.

"I am going to make a confession," he said. "I know you are going to think me a contemptible cad. I know I have been one; but I also believe one need not go on being a cad. It can be blotted out. I hope you can think so. I was fascinated by your aunt. I never was in love with her. I persuaded myself that did not so much matter. If she cared for me enough we could marry and I would try to not let her see the lack in me. I am miserably poor, as far as money goes. I have had a frightful struggle. My art means everything to me, and it seemed I must give it up or starve. She told me she had enough to make the way for me easy. You see, now!" he cried, with intense disgust. "You see how low I fell when I could take this woman's money and give her no love in return! Then that day before the picture—when I knew you—I couldn't do it. Can you forgive it?"

"I can blot it out," she said.

"They told me you were the poor relation. Could you go on being poor with me? I love you so much it would not matter to me."

"It would not matter to me," she answered.

It was a quiet place, and when he next spoke he said: "We shall not be so very poor. My pictures are beginning to sell."

"No," she said, with a queer little smile. "You see, I have a great deal more money than Aunt Ethel. I'm going to own that wonderful picture, and we shall always have the 'Spring time'."

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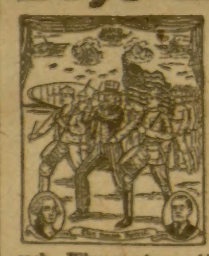

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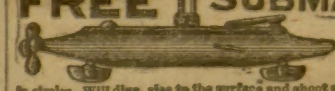

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VOL. XLVI. CHICAGO, ILL., SEPTEMBER 28, 1918. No. 39.

Beginning a Thrilling Four-part Story by an Old Ledger Favorite

THE HEAD OF ADAM

By Victor Ardmore

A much despised painting, an eccentric old aunt, a band of smugglers and a beautiful girl involve Benton Dudley in infinite trouble and endless mystery.

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CHAPTER I.

THE PRIZE OF THE IGNORANT.

THE trouble at San Eugenio with Benton Dudley as its storm-center arose from a very slight beginning. Growing swiftly, it took firm hold upon him, carried him along into duplicity and danger, and wove a web of perplexing mystery about him from which there was no visible way of escape. And always tragedy kept step with the other events.

San Eugenio, by the way, is on the coast of California, and Dudley, a native of Indiana, was there as a promoter, his specialty being to enlist capital to seek for gold in the salt water just off the land. It was, however, not this which took him, just after twilight, one evening, to the office of his friend, Peter Allen, the would-be leading real estate dealer of the place. Pete, tho not blessed with much money, had a business. The promoter had less money and a theory.

Dudley's manner was a trifle nervous as he entered the office, and, failing to return the greeting that met him, he plunged into business unceremoniously.

"Peter," he exclaimed, "I want you to do me a favor."

"Let me hear about it," encouraged Allen, smiling but cautious.

"You will laugh when you hear, but it's really no joke. Of course you are aware that a party of excursionists from the East passes thru San Eugenio this evening, a big party in all, being the orthodox seeing-the-world tourist band now so unhappily common. This particular party goes at once to Santa Barbara, and from there still farther."

Peter nodded comprehension.

"Now," Dudley pursued, "along with that party, as I've just learned by letter, is an aunt of mine from my old home in Indiana. She wants to stop over in this town for a night—tho she would probably make it a month—and then rejoin the other excursionists, or so she writes. Now, Peter, I won't see that woman!"

The promoter hammered the desk heartily with a sizable fist and kept on talking steadily.

"Aunt Arethusa is no one to enthuse over. She's well meaning, but she dresses like a girl of twenty. Rainbows aren't in it with her. Perhaps you see the point——"

"I infer that Aunt Arethusa is the point," said Allen humorously.

"Drop it, man, drop it!" Dudley demanded. "No levity. Look at this seriously. I am in San Eugenio seeking to enlist moneyed men in my design to find gold in the ocean waters just off the coast. To promote my plan I pose as a dignified man. Peter, if Aunt Arethusa gets here and lets the public see her barber-pole style of dress, she will make me a laughing stock and my gold enterprise will go to smash.

"Now," said the promoter, coming to the point, "I simply won't encounter that woman, and I want you to meet her, tell her I've left town for a week or more, and thus induce her to keep right along tonight with the excursion party. Will you help me out, Peter?"

The seemingly harmless duplicity of the plan appealed to Allen and he made his decision quickly. "Trust me!" he exclaimed. "Best joke I ever heard of. I'll set the lady on the right track. One thing I insist upon, tho."

"What's that?"

"You must really leave San Eugenio for the night. If you remain she may see you by some ill chance, and so expose me in a lie. You must go."

"I'll do that gladly. Let me see—where can I go?"

"Go fishing! There is a stream south of here, you know, the one that runs past Darlington Lane's art museum. You know where that is."

"I surely do. I've been in the museum, and acted the part of Judas by claiming to be away up in art when I don't know a landscape from an old cathedral. I like your plan, tho. I remember the stream in the rear of the museum, and I'll visit it tonight. Yes, and I've got to hurry, for the train will land my aunt here too soon for safety if I delay."

"If you meet Miss Clara Lane at the museum, don't make love to her. Lucius Jerimore, the revenue officer, claims first right to do that, and might mix you up with a few stray bullets."

"Jerimore and Miss Clara don't count."

"Possibly the same may be said of the fish, for some kinds don't bite after dark. Going? Well, don't come back soon enough to expose me."

"Do you think I'll risk meeting Aunt Arethusa? Never! Good night, Peter."

Dudley's quarters were at the east outskirts of the town, where he had hired a few acres of land and a furnished dwelling, installed a Mexican woman named Francisca as his housekeeper, and her son Jacobo as herder and man-of-all-work. To this place he now took himself with long steps. As usual, Jacobo was not in sight, so Dudley harnessed his horse personally, attached him to the chaise and, being ready to go, started away.

The road from San Eugenio was good, and he was borne easily along and at last he came upon Darlington Lane's private art museum, standing in majestic solitude on a little rise of land.

Mr. Lane, being rich, and an admirer of art, had erected a fine stone structure a few minutes' walk from his house, and, filling it with rare paintings and curiosities, had maintained a suitable force of help and kept the place open every day, as well as on certain evenings. He was proclaimed a great benefactor by many, including Dudley, tho the latter's professed admiration of its treasures was feigned.

He Never Looked at His Companion, but Held His Head Forward and Peered at Both Sides of the Road.

Just now the quietude of the vicinity promised well for him.

"As this is not an open evening," he mused, "nobody will be in the museum but Hiram Blount, the janitor. I'll dodge him, for I don't want this outing of mine to be known."

At that point he met another turnout, a double-seater with a span attached. The driver looked at him, and the single passenger, whom he recognized as one James Stanton, called out to him amiably and the two swept past each other. Three minutes more took Dudley to the entrance of the museum grounds. A dim light at a window suggested that the janitor was on duty, and, not feeling certain but that he might be regarded as a trespasser, he grew covetous of secrecy.

Determined on keeping his presence unknown, he avoided the broad drive to the building, which was a hundred yards back from the road, and, entering the grounds short of that point, he drove thru the grove as quietly as possible. Nobody interfered, and he finally reined in, dismounted and tied his horse. Nothing remained but to get to the brook; after walking a few rods, however, he encountered a difficult fence which he had forgotten, and he was therefore obliged to go closer to the side of the building.

He was slipping past when the door suddenly opened and Hiram Blount appeared, light in hand. The prowler shrank back, but he was not quick enough. The caretaker first looked greatly surprised and then rallied.

"Good evening, Mr. Dudley!" he called cheerfully.

The promoter hesitated and then mumbled a suitable reply. "Do you want to come in, sir?" Hiram added.

"Yes. Why, no, not now. I'm in too big a hurry. Fact is, I've lost my horse and am looking for it. I think he's over yonder, and I'll lead him away north. Don't let me trouble you."

With this he hastened on toward the brook and Hiram was left to himself. Dudley grew irritable.

"Now," he muttered, "why did I say that? Lost my horse, eh? For a useless, crazy falsehood, that is a prize-taker. Unnecessary folly!"

Arriving at the stream he found a suitable place by its near bank where he could sit with his back to a tree, and, lighting a cigar, he began to smoke diligently. He was in absolute solitude.

"I'm glad nobody will ever know of this," he mused. "Before now I've been called eccentric, and this would be the finishing touch. Putting fishing aside, it really is a bit odd that I should come here, but where is a better spot to meditate on legitimate business? Ah! I must soon find the right wealthy man to finance my excellent enterprise of getting gold out of the river mouths, and when I find him——"

Dudley was embarked on a fascinating mental occupation, and for two hours he remained by the brook. By that time he was growing sleepy, so, deciding that Aunt Arethusa and the other excursionists from the East must have reached San Eugenio and passed it by, he rose briskly and went to his horse. It was where he had left it, and, casually noting that the museum was now dark, he mounted to the chaise seat and drove out of the grounds the way he had come.

The return to town was uneventful. Reaching his home he looked for Jacobo, failed to find him as usual, and then set out to lodge his horse in the structure called a stable, tho it was really a mere shed.

Driving under its open part, he took

the animal out of the shafts and placed him in the stall. Nothing really remained to be done, but, driver-like, he arranged the shafts fastidiously, patted the cushion, and was pulling the attached flap so it would set in a shapely way when his hand encountered something underneath the seat. Perplexed and a trifle startled, he took down the lantern that hung on the wall, lit it, and went back to the chaise.

"Great heavens!" he gasped.

For in the carriage was an oil painting, and he recognized it as one of Darlington Lane's collection, the one reputed to be an old master. Possessed of another man's property, he was an unknowing thief, and ignorance is no excuse in the eyes of the law.

But how had it happened?

CHAPTER II.

THE INTIMATE FRIEND OF CRIME.

HOLDING the painting in one hand and the lantern in the other, Dudley stared blankly at the old master, utterly unable to understand the situation. More, he had suddenly become upset and worried, for he distinctly remembered that this particular picture, tho small of size, was valued at twenty-five thousand dollars by its owner.

While he looked he thought he heard a footstep outside. Additionally disturbed, he hastened to the entrance and pulling the sliding door out thus shut himself from observation, or so at least he supposed. Then he went back to the old master.

Of all Darlington Lane's collection there was none other he remembered so distinctly as this. It was a bust portrait, brown with age, and to him it had always seemed hideous. Undoubtedly this was because his acquaintance with art was so limited, for in a corner was the magic inscription: "Rembrandt." When in its proper place a card had rested thrust into the opposite corner, and the cataloger had written on the pasteboard: "Supposed Head of Adam."

It was this inscription, this bold familiarity with the personal appearance of the father of the human race, that had so stamped the picture upon Dudley's memory.

Worse yet, it was a celebrated painting locally. Darlington Lane had set great store by it, had called everybody's attention to it, had ranked it as the gem of his museum, and had boasted of it in season and out. In the higher circles at San Eugenio, the Head of Adam was a household word.

Greatly as Dudley was worried, his wonder mastered everything else. How had the Rembrandt come to the chaise? Coveting secrecy, he had tied his horse several rods from the museum, but even if it had been at the door the mystery would have been thick as night. He could not understand it.

After a few minutes wonder was swept into the background by apprehension. He was in possession of stolen property, and, while innocent in intent, he would be ruined by detection. After being proven guilty of stealing the Head of Adam, if he escaped prison he could not expect to enlist men in his scheme of seeking gold in the ocean sands of the coast.

Clearly, the Rembrandt must go back to the museum. The building would be locked, but he could hammer at the door, awaken the janitor, and then leave the wretched thing on the steps and flee unseen.

Thrusting the painting under the seat again, he opened the sliding door, ran the chaise out, and, in a few minutes, had the horse once more between the shafts, his mind eased by the darkness and the silence of the house.

Driving away, he was soon on the south road, and this time, anxious to be rid of the evidence of guilt, he pressed the horse to speed, ardently hoping the theft had not yet been discovered and that officers were not abroad seeking for the thief.

That possibility was so disquieting that he tried to forget it, and again fell to speculating how the picture had come into his possession. Certainly Hiram Blount was not responsible, for he was honest and faithful. If a real thief had purloined it, why should he part with it so soon, and in such an extraordinary way?

Just at this point Dudley's meditations were roughly interrupted. Without warning a man leaped out of the fringe of trees by the wayside.

"Hold up!" he cried sharply.

The promoter's hand sought his pocket, but found only emptiness where he sometimes carried a revolver.

"Oh! So it's you, Dudley," added the newcomer.

The recognition was now mutual. The promoter saw that the man in the road was one Lucius Jerimore, a revenue officer whose duty it was to prevent smuggling along the coast. To avoid running him down, Dudley reined in reluctantly.

"I want a lift," added Mr. Jerimore. "Let me in!" and he climbed into the chaise. This was not peculiar, for, tho their acquaintance had been rather haphazard, the men had known each other for some months.

"Excellent!" pursued the revenue man, with a sigh of relief. "Be so good as to keep up your lively gait, will you? I'm in a bit of a hurry. Glad you came along to help my legs out."

There was no gladness on Dudley's

The Prowler Shrank Back, but He Was Not Quick Enough.

part. The object under the seat—what if Jerimore found it?

"Going to Santa Barbara?" continued the unwelcome passenger.

"No," Dudley replied, finding his voice. "Business hours being past I'm out for a drive. That's all."

"I envy your lot. Work ends with you at dark. What's your opinion of prowling around at night with guilty secrets on your mind?"

"Guilty secrets?" repeated the promoter uneasily.

"I don't mean," explained Jerimore, "that I have any on my mind, but that it's my duty to nab those who have such a load of guilt. Did you ever carry a burden of that sort?"

"It is hardly in my line."

"Lucky man! Nothing like an untroubled conscience."

The promoter scowled, wondering if there was a hidden meaning back of the remark. Then he had another shock. His tardy recollections reminded him that Jerimore was the lover, successful or otherwise, of Miss Clara, daughter of Darlington Lane of the art museum. Now, the Head of Adam and Jerimore were far too close together.

The latter never looked at his companion, but held his head forward and peered at both sides of the road. What did he expect? Dudley wondered, but did not overlook the possibility of a plot against himself.

The revenue man swung his feet back partly under the seat, giving Dudley fresh worry. What if he struck the painting and grew curious?

"Got a revolver?" asked Jerimore abruptly.

"Yes," Dudley rashly falsified.

"You may need it yet. Fact is, I've been after smugglers, tonight, and expect to meet them at any moment. You've heard of the brig Gray Gull, haven't you?"

"The name is vaguely familiar, but I don't place it."

"It's a craft that plies between California and sundry foreign ports. Really, I can't say it's a smuggler, but that is what I am trying to prove. Haven't you seen its captain, Ignacio Varga?"

"Yes, I've seen Varga, but I didn't know he was a smuggler."

"If he actually is, I wish I knew it. Possibly I'm the only man who suspects him, but that does not trouble me. I am investigating the Gray Gull and her affairs. She lately made this coast, home from Portugal, and tonight I've seen suspicious signs. Men were moving around hereabouts, but they dodged me and——"

Jerimore's voice died away, but he looked all the sharper into the darkness. Then he abruptly sat erect.

"Carriage coming!" he announced. There may be fighting. Get your revolver ready! They may turn aside, if they want to avoid us—were you going to drive south, or along the cross-road?"

"The cross-road."

At that moment the reply seemed to Dudley like an inspiration. In saying so, he not only denied the fact that he was on his way to the museum, but, he hoped, it gave an excuse for being rid of his passenger at once, for Jerimore appeared to be bound south.

The other vehicle was advancing steadily, tho not yet visible. Dudley looked at Jerimore's conspicuous revolver, took in the breath of war reluctantly, and then ran his foot back under the seat in search of the Rembrandt. His shoe encountered something not a part of the chaise, and he felt more content. With the painting safe he did not care particularly if there was a fight.

A few seconds more and the other travelers were but a matter of yards distant. As they became visible the situation took on pressing form, but, suddenly, their horse's head was swung and they turned at right angles with their former course.

"They've taken to the cross-road and are off for the ocean," the revenue man exclaimed. "That fact lends some color to my suspicion that they are salt-water criminals. Glad I have a man of courage along with me. Rush after them—that's your road, you know."

Acutely regretting his recent mention of the cross-road, Dudley could not now think of any excuse for refusing to turn into it, especially as refusal would make him out a coward. He reined his horse as was necessary, and they once more got into a rapid pace.

Again Dudley touched the thing under the seat with his foot, wondering what new adventure was ahead of the cherished Rembrandt. Jerimore grew excited. Unwilling to engage in a long chase, he aspired to quicker methods.

"Hallo, there!" he cried. "I want a word with you. Halt!"

There was no reply. The other men attended strictly to business and kept their horse going.

"That about settles it!" growled Jerimore. "Honest folks would not run away in that style. Glad you are armed, for we may have a lively skirmish. If they are men from the Gray Gull they will scruple at nothing. I never saw a more villainous-looking lot in my life than that crew. No doubt, Dudley, you are certain your revolver is loaded to the chin, and that's good, for we are doubtless in for a sharp fight. Be ready to fire!"

The officer waved his own weapon at the fugitives. "I say, hallo!" he shouted. "Halt!"

One of the strangers partly turned. Then a revolver flashed in his hand and a bullet hummed past Dudley's head.

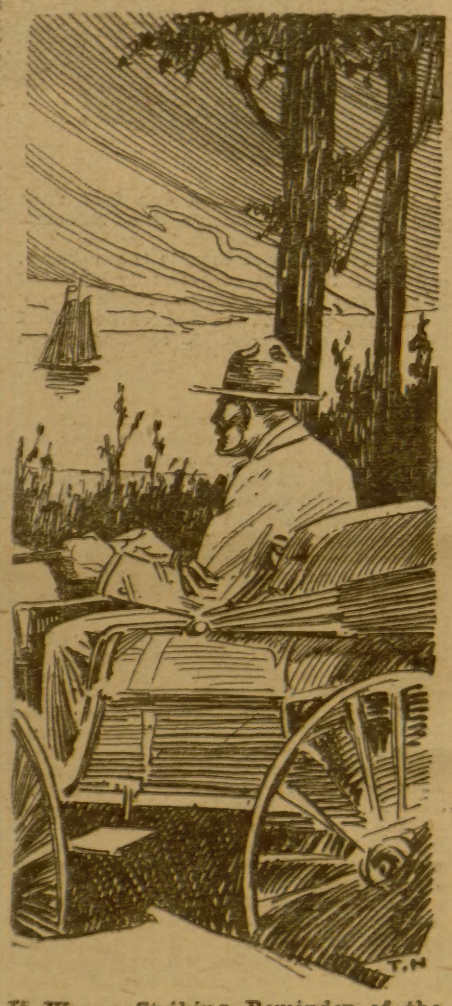
"Bravo!" cried Jerimore. "They are going to make a fight of it!"

CHAPTER III.

IN BAD COMPANY.

IT CERTAINLY looked as if the fugitives were not going to make tame surrender, but the thirst for blood was then lacking in Dudley, whose only passion was for the peace of the art museum and the return of the Rembrandt. He mentally anathematized the Head of Adam and Jerimore.

"Can't your horse do better?" the revenue officer asked. "Just overhaul those fellows, will you?"



It Was a Striking Reminder of the Gray Gull.

"The horse is already doing record work," Dudley sharply replied. "Why should I ruin him by over-urging?"

"If the brig Gray Gull is swindling the people and the law——"

"That is the affair of the law. I'm not a smuggler-catcher."

"I understand," sneered Jerimore, "that your business is to boil down salt water to extract gold from it."

"Just so!" Dudley returned composedly. "Do you want to invest a few thousand in my scheme? It is a self-evident fact that rivers flowing from the hills must bear large quantities of gold to the ocean, and the accumulation only awaits the beckoning hand of man. Now, if you care to invest, say twenty-five thousand dollars, ultimate riches will be yours."

"Just now, speed is better than gold."

Jerimore really had no cause for complaint, but, rapidly as they pursued, the strangers held their own in the race.

"It's got to end soon," said Jerimore presently. "We are nearing the so-called shore road. We shall strike it near the house of one Edmund Rodley. Maybe you've heard of him—he's a friend of Darlington Lane's."

"I know Rodley slightly."

"What I'm interested in is how our speed rivals will act when they reach that road. There is a little harbor somewhat to the south, a spot large enough for the Gray Gull to drop her anchor, if Captain Varga desires, and I rather expect them to head that way. We must prevent them from getting on board the brig. That doubtless means that we shall both be under fire, Dudley. Ah! here's the cross-road! Hello!"

The last word was an exclamation of surprise. Instead of turning to right or left the runaways had partly reined in their horse, and then leaped to the ground. Another moment and they both plunged into the sparse woods beyond, their faces still toward the ocean.

"Pass their abandoned horse and keep right on," Jerimore directed. "There is no fence, and I think the field is open enough for a carriage to move between the trees. Try it, Dudley."

The promotor fancied he would soon be free from the revenue man, so he urged his horse and they crossed the road and plunged into the gloom under the overhead leaves. Altho the chaise rocked uncomfortably, he managed to avoid going to wreck against the tree trunks.

Jerimore shouted an order that was disregarded, and, a hundred yards farther on, thickets absolutely barred the way to the vehicle. He fired a shot, which was utterly disregarded.

"We've got to take to our legs ourselves, Dudley!" he added. "Jump out, and follow close after me."

He leaped to the ground and continued the pursuit, but Dudley sat still.

"Go with you!" he muttered. "Not unless I've lost my mind. Being guard over the Head of Adam, my way is toward the museum. All other things be hanged!" He ran his foot backward once more, touched that substantial something under the seat that was not a permanent part of the chaise, and breathed a sigh of relief. All he had to do was to retrace his steps to the main road and go thence to the museum. It was only a matter of time when he would be rid of the wretched Rembrandt.

Entangled in the bushes, he turned with difficulty. He was about to start afresh when a dark figure appeared beside the off wheel.

"It seems to me, Jerimore," exclaimed the promoter caustically, "that your zeal has suddenly ebbed. Those fellows must have scared you off."

The dark figure climbed into the chaise and took a seat beside the driver.

"Whip up!" was the deliberate command.

"Why, the dickens; you're not Jerimore!" Dudley cried.

"Pass that by. Drive toward the road. Whip up!"

"Do you think I'm driving a public carriage for hire? No, and I'm giving no free rides. Get out of here, and stay out!"

A hand and a revolver moved close to Dudley's head, and one of the two pressed hard against his temple.

"There is convenient room here for two living men," the stranger announced, "but I hate to have a dead one around. Don't compel me to shoot. Drive on!"

There was unchallengeable logic in the combination of incisive tone and revolver, and the reinsman took heed. Being himself unarmed, only one course was open to him, tho he was not frightened.

"Where do you want to go?" he demanded curtly.

"Where I tell you. First of all, get back to the road and do it in record time. Get away, flying!"

A slight thump from the revolver satisfied Dudley that the stranger knew best, and he piloted the horse as ordered.

"Now turn south and drive for all you're worth. Be lively, and play no tricks. Believe me, I'm awake!"

Sitting more erect, he drew his feet back under the seat forcibly and something rattled loudly.

"Ouch!" he growled, "I nearly broke

a bone then. What in blazes have you got under the seat?"

Dudley had forgotten the Rembrandt briefly, but those intruding heels recalled it to memory. Another man had been within an inch of discovering it, but the danger passed by again.

"Urge your horse a little more," the passenger added, with but momentary silence. "Pack on all possible sail."

The peculiar nautical expression led Dudley to take a side glance at his companion. More than once his voice had sounded familiar, and Dudley gained the truth now in spite of the dim night light. The man was one he had seen in San Eugenio, where he had heard him described as Luke Garroway, mate of the brig Gray Gull.

Then he had a new thought. The point where he and Jerimore had first encountered the other riders was not far from the art museum. What, Dudley uneasily wondered, had they been doing in that quarter? Perhaps it was the smugglers who had taken the Head of Adam from Darlington Lane's collection, and now, he feared, the precious painting was being conveyed to where the lawless crew waited in numbers.

He promptly arrived at a decision. In spite of the revolver at his temple he was going to try to be rid of Luke Garroway. At the risk of being shot he was resolved to pitch the fellow out of the carriage——

"Almost there," said the smuggler cheerfully. "Turn from the road here. You will find a fairly open way among the trees. Drive me sixty rods and you may be excused and allowed to turn back—alone, mind you, all alone."

Dudley growled obscurely and obeyed, taking to the field. What he wanted was to be rid of Garroway and left to the sole company of the Rembrandt.

"Whoa!" the sailor soon added. "Here is where we part. You see nothing but trees and darkness, do you? Never mind—all you have to do is to turn and get back to the road, but do it with lively hoofs. Now then! Turn, stay for nothing, but, simply, get out!"

He had dismounted while speaking, and was standing to see that he was obeyed. Just then a night-fowl left its perch on a branch with a whir and a flapping of wings, and, as it swept close to the horse's head, that animal, startled, bounded forward wildly. Dudley pulled hard at the reins and Garroway shouted in the rear, but, heedless of the sawing bit, the runaway fled for a hundred yards and then, as it left the woods behind and reached the open, it condescended to obey the restraining force at the reins.

But that coming to the open had made a great change in Dudley's view. Off to the right he saw the waters of the Pacific under the clouded sky, while, nearer at hand, was a tiny bay, and in the bay a vessel riding to her anchor. It was a striking reminder of the Gray Gull, but something nearer took hold of his attention and held it.

He had run nearly into the center of a group of a dozen men. Undoubtedly, he was with Captain Ignacio Varga's smugglers, and the Head of Adam had, perhaps, been borne into the clutches of its original stealers.

For a moment the party were as much alarmed as himself, but when they saw that only one man confronted them their mood changed.

"A spy, a spy!" was the vicious chorus.

Weapons were freely drawn, and one swarthy fellow sprang to the side of the chaise with an ugly knife advanced, but Garroway came running from the woods.

"Stop right here, Roberto," he cried. "This man is no spy. I've forced him to drive me here, and was about to send him back when his horse took fright and ran away, galloping to this spot. Let the man alone! All we need to do is to turn him back again."

"I object," growled Roberto belligerently. "He has seen us and the brig. We won't permit him to go back to spread tales to our harm——"

"Don't be a fool. We shall soon fill and stand away."

"The Captain has said not a sail is to be spread until we get what we are here for, and he's right. Put this fellow aboard and take him with us."

Roberto presented this plan like an after-thought, but his tense poise and glittering eyes indicated an intention of leaping at Dudley if chance was allowed him, and his knife explained the rest of his design.

"That will do!" curtly exclaimed Garroway. "I'm in command here while the Captain is away and my word goes. Get back, every man!"

The mate's manner was now such that his subordinates did not venture to disobey, but tho they fell away from the chaise, their air was sullen and charged with latent rebellion. Plainly, however, they were quelled for the time.

Bidding Dudley keep his seat, Garroway turned the horse and himself led the animal several rods along the back-track. Presently he stopped.

"You may go now," he then said, "and the sooner the better. If you are wise, be silent regarding what you've seen here. The man who can hold his tongue usually lives to old age. Go back home!"

He slapped the horse on the side, and, as the beast started, again slipped away into the darkness like a shadow. Dudley added his own urging and, as the horse proceeded, did some thinking.

"That brig was the Gray Gull," he mused, "and she is no mere merchantman plying between this coast and European ports. Jerimore has her properly analyzed. Honest merchantmen do not shun open harbors and, instead, poke their noses into uninhabited nooks like that back there. A hard-looking gang! I hope Roberto will not take a notion to evade his commander and waylay me here with that villainous knife of his!"

CHAPTER IV.

OTHERS WANT THE REMBRANDT.

THE ride to the public road was not enjoyable. Dudley thought of the Head of Adam with a series of chills, and tho his investigating foot showed him that his burden was still under the seat, he worried keenly lest it would not long remain there. Hurrying his horse constantly, he looked back and tried to prevent surprise.

He had reached the road, and he gave the horse another urging and hastened north to gain the cross-way that led toward home.

As he neared the single house to which Jerimore had previously called attention he grew interested and looked closely. It was the home of Edmund Rodley, a rich man whom he wished to enlist as a backer for his enterprise of getting gold from the ocean sands.

He had just noticed that a light was burning in the house, when he was briefly startled by the sound of a voice near the roadside bushes.

"That you, Patterson?" was the inquiry.

"No," replied the promoter, pulling at the reins. "I think, sir, that I address Mr. Rodley."

"Why, yes, and I now recognize you, Mr. Dudley. You drive late. Don't suppose you have seen Patterson? He's my neighbor to the south, you know, and he was to come along and take Miss Clara Lane home. She is waiting here for him. Patterson is long overdue, so, altho I am no longer young, I will myself harness and take Miss Clara home."

The younger man was slightly acquainted with Miss Lane, but it was not her identity that made him immediately anxious to oblige in the matter. Instead, he was eager to please Mr. Rodley and thus make a bid for his dollars. Those dollars would bring gold up out of the salt water if Rodley saw fit to lend his help.

"In case a poor substitute will answer," he hurriedly replied, "I shall be glad to offer my services. Pray ask Miss Lane if she will accept my help and the use of my chaise. I now see her here. May I be of service?"

"But," remonstrated the lady, "you live in town, Mr. Dudley, and it will take you out of your way to carry me home."

"Granted the pleasure of helping, I shall enjoy the little jaunt."

He had almost said the pleasure of helping Mr. Rodley, but managed to check himself. It was just as well to let it be thought that it was Miss Lane he wanted to accommodate.

She was clearly glad to accept his offer, and said as much, and after parting with the older gentleman the young couple drove away.

"It is shockingly late to be out," said Miss Clara vivaciously, "but we felt sure Mr. Patterson would come, and that was why I was waiting as you found me. I suppose you've been out for a pleasure drive?"

"Yes," Dudley promptly replied, "I've had a delightful evening."

"Very peaceful, isn't it?"

"I've found it so."

"Just like a section of Eden."

The chance remark set the promoter to thinking of something else, for it was natural to associate Eden and the Head of Adam. His foot went under the seat, touched the object there, and then telegraphed to his mind that all was well with Rembrandt's masterpiece. Dudley had an attack of partial madness and wanted to tell the lady that her father's celebrated painting was in the vehicle, but while he hesitated the wayside peace was broken a little in the rear and a man ran from the bordering woods and shouted to them. The word "help" was clearly distinguishable.

While He Looked, He Thought He Heard a Footstep Outside.

"He wants something," said Miss Clara.

"Yes," the promoter agreed, and hurried his horse.

"Maybe it's important," she said, looking back.

"Probably a desperate robber."

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "I didn't think of that."

The other man, after running a few rods in pursuit and steadily losing ground, visibly gave up his attempt. Clara looked back again and meditated seriously.

"Do you know," she then said, "that sounded like Mr. Jerimore's voice."

"In that case, Jerimore himself was probably also there."

"Why, you joker!" she laughed. "Well, if it was he, I'm glad you didn't stop. To be candid, he wanted to drive here and take me home, but I managed to evade his request. I dare say he will be angry and maybe will call to say something to me. I mean, if he recognized us just now."

Dudley took a side look at his companion. A month before Darlington Lane had refused to finance the salt water gold scheme, so the promoter, naturally classifying him as a man of no account, had leaped to the conclusion that his daughter was a commonplace young woman. Now, however, he saw a very trim, stylish, alert figure at his elbow, and for the first time it seemed to him that her face was worth looking at more than casually.

"Of course," she added, "Mr. Jerimore has no right to dictate, since he is only a passing acquaintance. I merely meet him rather often because he comes to the museum, and I pass considerable of my time there. The other day he was there, and talking about some smuggler folks he claimed to have partial knowledge of, and I said to him, 'Some time you will catch somebody.' Do you know, he really was angry!" and Miss Clara laughed. "Why, he looked as black as our most severe pictures by the old masters!"

Dudley moved uneasily. He did not want to hear anything about the old masters, especially as they were nearing the museum. What if Clara took a notion to visit the building before going home?

It happened that her chief desire was to get home, so they passed the art building, reached the Lane dwelling-house and brought a servant to the door by due knocking. After she entered Dudley drove away.

"Really," he mused, "I did not know she was so interesting."

She filled his thoughts all the way to the road, but there he suddenly recalled that his business of the night was not yet done. The Head of Adam must be returned quietly and secretly. A knock at the museum door would arouse Hiram Blount, and when it was certain he was astir, the painting could be left on the step while the promoter took to quick but secret flight.

It was very simple and his mind grew easier. Entering the museum grounds, he placed his horse where he could get away to the best advantage later, and was congratulating himself on the fact that the building was in darkness, when he thought he heard somebody moving among the trees. He stood motionless, listening, but no one appeared. All seemed to be well.

"Now is my time!" he muttered.

He thrust his hand under the seat of the chaise, reached the object he had so often touched with his foot during the drive, experienced a little shock, and then drew the object forth. It was a piece of thick plank, eighteen inches long and half as wide. Surprised and startled, he again plunged his hand into the recess. It encountered nothing substantial, tho he felt rapidly from corner to corner. Then crushing disappointment came upon him.

The Head of Adam was gone!

He stood motionless, his ideas tumbling over each other, but none of them coherent. Gone, but when, where and how? Not taken by Miss Clara, certainly, which left only Jerimore and the smugglers to suspect; yet, how could any of them have taken the painting? He had been constantly in the vehicle except when turning his horse near the shore-road, and then nobody else was there.

How could the Rembrandt be stolen from under his very feet?

Aroused, he looked at the rear of the chaise, but the boot was without the slightest slit. Puzzled by the bit of plank he lifted it again and handled it meditatively. It dawned upon him that it was the object he had been touching with his foot so often during the drive. Then other thoughts came. The space under the seat was hardly large enough for both the plank and picture. When he thrust the Head of Adam into that place at his stable, there had been no obstacle, yet if the plank had been there it would have been a positive barrier. Then he knew the truth.

The Rembrandt had not been with him at any time since he left his own house. It had been stolen before he started.

He sifted it out after a time. When he first discovered the painting, at his stable, and was looking at it in dismay, he had thought that a footstep sounded outside, whereupon he had closed the stable door. All very well, thus far, but, immediately after, forgetting the footstep, he had run the chaise out of the building and then, leaving it unguarded for the fraction of a minute, had brought his horse to it, and this had made the opportunity for the thief. It was then, he reasoned, that the Head of Adam had been purloined and the plank substituted.

"I'm ruined!" he muttered. "Hiram Blount saw me by the museum, recognized me, and called me by name. When they learn that the Rembrandt is gone the evidence will point straight to me. Yes, and my stupendous folly in claiming to admire the Head of Adam, in days past, will fall into line. Not being aware that my alleged admiration was sarcasm, they will consider me the logical thief. Even if I escape a long term in prison, my business enterprise in San Eugenio will be ruined, and my entire asset will be a smirched reputation."

He took rapid steps back and forth,

nervously active, and then the hope that never dies came as a friend.

"Why, it can't be so!" he exclaimed. "That theft can't have been fact. I was nervous when at the stable, and, thru some chance, I thrust this plank into the chaise instead of the picture. All I have to do is to go back, and there the Head of Adam will be."

He swung into the vehicle, started afresh, and was soon homeward bound at a lively clip. It was not a pleasant ride, for his mind persisted in harboring gloomy visions of the future, and the natural sounds in the woods by the way gave him more than one start. Momentarily, each rustle seemed to be the coming of Jerimore, or the men of the Gray Gull, or other dangerous persons.

At last Dudley drew up before his stable door. Without waiting to attend to his horse he entered, found his lantern, made a light and looked eagerly about him. He saw nothing of the Rembrandt.

Going to the chaise he examined the plank, and positively recognized it as his own property. A worthless remnant of something or other, it had been lying around ever since he occupied the house. Discouraged but pertinacious, he looked more widely, and, finding nothing in the open part of the stable, fell to peering into nooks and recesses.

Mainly, the stable was floorless, but there was a bit of boarding at one point, and, below, a small cavity. Kneeling, he lifted a board and looked beneath. Altho a forlorn hope, it was possible that the latest thief had secreted his plunder somewhere about the premises. It was possible——

Then a blow fell upon Dudley's head, beating him closer to the cavity. He tried to rise and, clutching at random, seized upon a garment, but the blow came again and consciousness went out.

When he recovered, after an unknown time, he was alone. The lantern stood some feet distant, well removed from where he had left it, and his horse stamped restlessly outside. He staggered to his feet. A sharp pain gnawed at his head, but he did not feel seriously injured. He went to the door. The horse greeted him with a low whinny, evidently weary of waiting.

That was all. The stable, the house and the outer world were alike quiet, and he saw no human being.

Turning back once more he noticed that confusion was everywhere. The bit of flooring was wholly torn up, and things had been generally shifted and disarranged.

"Somebody else has been after the Rembrandt!" he muttered dully.

He presently discovered an unusual object near where he had been attacked and picked it up. It was that belonging of a sailor commonly known as a "housewife," a case for holding needles, thread and the like, and was a positive reminder of the sea.

"The smugglers have been here," he added, still dully.

At that moment he did not reflect that, before the assault, he had been in the hands of the crew of the Gray Gull, but he did recall his former apprehension that somebody was stirring near the museum when he was last there. Had he been followed home and then attacked?

The impression increased that he had to reckon further with Captain Ignacio Varga's men. It was nothing to him that they were smugglers, but the shadow of the Head of Adam was over all.

Lost, found, and lost again! And where was it now? Remembering there were such things as law and prisons, he was sorry Hiram Blount had recognized him.

Later, he took up ordinary labor mechanically, stabled the horse and himself went to bed, noting with temporary indifference that his chamber in the house was also in confusion. His head was too painful for delay then.

When he awoke the sun was high and old Francisca was calling him to breakfast. He dressed and left his room. The housekeeper was finishing the setting of the table, while her son, Jacobo, the herder, was repairing a whip. Both were humble, devoted souls, and their mild words of morning cheer pleased him. He had something to ask, and went about it promptly.

"Francisca," he said, "did you hear a prowler, last night?"

"Blessed saints, no!" replied the woman. "Who has prowled, senor?"

"Who knows? You have seen nobody, and heard nothing?"

"Nothing, senor."

"And you, Jacobo?"

"Nothing, senor."

"When did you go to bed?"

"Jacobo was ill and went early, while I went at 10 o'clock, senor."

"It is nothing, good people. I will eat."

He tried to do it, but, tho recovered physically, his appetite was not good. The Rembrandt lay heavy upon his spirits and affected his appetite. When he was thru he went outside and saw a man approaching on horseback. Sight of him gave Dudley a chill. It was San Eugenio's chief of police. Visits from him were unusual, and fresh trouble formed vaguely before the promoter's eyes.

The chief arrived fully, stopped, presented a grave face and nodded stiffly but rather kindly.

"Senor," he said abruptly, "I regret that I bear painful news."

"What news?" asked the young man, trying to be outwardly calm.

"Last night Hiram Blount, caretaker of the Darlington Lane Museum, was the victim of an assault, and badly, perhaps fatally, hurt. He says it was you who attacked him, and I am here to arrest you. I'm sorry, Mr. Dudley, but I have my duty to perform, and attempted murder is bad business!"

Accused of theft, Dudley tells the story about his fishing trip, and is freed on bail, only to meet even more mystifying circumstances. He and Clara Lane become arch-conspirators, and their adventures prove exciting.

ACCIDENT ALGIE

By Leland S. Chester

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A perfect dub with a revolver—that was Algie. So when the bullet from his weapon killed a man the others knew it was an accident. But one day they saw—

UNSOPHISTICATED strangers drifting into Dusty Plains were told that it was a combination cow and mining town; but, tho we did have a few ranches scattered about the country and some placers in the hills to the north, it was neither one. Dusty was a sort of health resort for a certain class of gentlemen threatened with hot lead poisoning and hemp strangulation in other parts of the country.

Not that we didn't have a semblance of local government, you understand, for we did have. But it was only a semblance. We had a county judge, a sheriff and a prosecuting attorney; but their activities were concerned mostly with duties not included in their oaths of office. Judge Sam Peters owned the Stuffed Eagle saloon and a half interest in the gambling-house run in connection; Sheriff Bill Mead owned the other half, and assisted the croupier when business was good; Dude Warren, our prosecutor, didn't do anything but draw his salary from the county and a good fat indemnity from the refugees for being neutral.

Whenever a stranger with no visible means of support drifted in he was listed immediately for membership in the Local Order of Protected Badmen, waited on by the enrollment committee and put thru a sort of third degree. His eligibility being properly established he was made familiar with the rules and regulations, the constitution and the by-laws and invited to join. If he refused there were the four cardinal points of the compass and plenty of room in between to leave by, or there was the stuffy jail in which to languish until the proper authorities could be notified. Usually he joined and paid his dues as per schedule.

But Algernon Whistletree was a new and puzzling type. He was different from the general run of incoming stragglers. He hadn't done anything before he came. He waited until he was ready to leave and then put over a stunner right in our very midst.

One August afternoon when the sun was hot enough to fry eggs, a young fellow, rigged out in true Wild West style, piled down from a rangy bay horse and came into the Stuffed Eagle. He was a clean looking youngster, about 25, with dark hair and eyes and a skin that wasn't used to our kind of sunshine.

And talk about your stage make-ups! He had on one of the widest Stetsons I'd ever seen, hooked down in front and behind and crushed in sort of crosswise, a blue flannel shirt loaded down with big pearl buttons, new Angora chaps and a pair of hand-made boots that must have cost at least $20. The rowels of his silver-mounted spurs looked like young buzz saws; from a tanned leather holster on his right hip peeped the pearl and nickeled handle of a brand-new six-shooter.

"Greetings, old scout," he said to Judge Peters, who was tending bar. "Whew! I've inspirated enough of this Arizona desert to build an island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. Compound me a generous irrigant for my esophagaen canal, quick; before I expire."

"Hold on there, young feller," said the Judge. "Take your time and talk American. Now what is it you want?"

"An internal immersion, my good friend," replied the youngster. "A stimulating ingurgitation, a spirituous imbibation. In other words I want a little rye with a shot of seltzer."

"Towers of Babylon," groaned the Judge. "Why didn't you say so in the first place? And hereafter please talk United States, because whatever country you're from you won't find anybody else here that knows the language."

Then Judge Peters glanced round at the crowd and began to set out a row of glasses.

"Sure," said the youngster, taking the hint. "Call 'em up. I was so dry I forgot it myself. Come up, everybody."

He swallowed his drink and called for another. Then he drug out a roll you couldn't have crammed into a stove pipe, ripped off a twenty and tossed it on the bar. "Give the boys another," he ordered, "and take it out of this. Me? No more till after supper."

Judge Peters had an eye that could see money farther than a buzzard can see carrion. At sight of that roll he licked his lips and got interested. The youngster looked like an eligible.

"I'd like a word with you—private," he said, and walked to the end of the bar where they were joined by the sheriff and Snakey Jones, the croupier.

"Now see here, young feller," the Judge began in the imposing tone he used when recruiting members for the L. O. of P. B., "folks with a roll like you got, don't come to Dusty Plains without a reason. What's yours?"

"Mine?" said the youngster. "Peace, happiness and future contentment. I needed a change of scene, surrounding and climate. I was physically fit but mentally malcontent. I——"

"Whoa-up! That'll do," cut in the sheriff. "We know you needed a change of climate. Most of our citizens did; and they don't send no postcards back home neither. What we want to know is how you gathered that wad."

"Oh, that," grinned the youngster. "Tending bar at a soda fountain in a drug emporium on dear old Manhattan Isle."

"Huh! And how did you come to leave a good job like that and come here?" sneered the sheriff.

"I tired of the confinement, dear friend," informed the youngster, "and wafted hither to bask in the broad and balmy bandon of the Wild and Woolly West. Is the elucidation sufficiently transpicuous?"

"Enough!" snapped the Judge. "We mean business. I'm the Judge of this county and Mister Mead there's the sheriff. You didn't accumilate all that money working in no drug store—unless you robbed the proprietor. Out with the truth. Tell us where you got it and we'll see you get a square deal. We believe in live and let live, and if you're sensible we can settle the whole thing outside the law."

The youngster looked from one to the other and grinned. "Oh," he said, "I begin to understand. You gentlemen seem to think I'm guilty of some malicious and diabolical act in violation of the sovereignty of this great republic. Is that it?"

"That's about it," acknowledged the Judge. "You've robbed somebody and maybe killed 'em to boot. But with as much money as you've got you can fix it so's the law'll be none the wiser." He winked.

"Yes, might as well come thru," put in Snakey Jones. "The evidence is all agin you."

Snakey was known as a bad man. He had brought a black record to Dusty. He had killed a couple of men, and the Lord knows what else. But he could manipulate a roulette wheel and a faro deck with the best of them, and as long as he kept the percentage up to standard our generous hearted authorities granted him immunity.

"Who's our outspoken friend here that seems so positive in his accusations?" asked the youngster, indicating Snakey. "And just what part does he play in promoting the immorality of the community?"

"That's Mister Cato Jones," said the Judge, "one of our prominent citizens, and if you stay here you'll get better acquainted with him."

For a moment one of the blackest looks I ever saw slipped over the youngster's face. Then he was all smiles again.

"Sure," he said. "I hope so. Yes, indeed, I mean to do that very thing. Mr. Jones and I shall get on famously." Then he turned to Judge Peters and the sheriff again. "But, gentlemen, you do me a grave injustice. I'm no criminal. Algernon Whistletree, aged twenty-five, five feet nine inches tall, weight one hundred and fifty-six pounds, dark hair and eyes, clear complexion, three cornered scar on right cheek, American flag tattooed on left forearm—that's me. Wire around the world and back again and see what you can find out."

That didn't satisfy our diligent county officials by any means, but it sort of stalled them. The Judge looked at the sheriff and the sheriff looked at the Judge; then they both cleared their throats and looked at Algernon.

"You seem a little too anxious to have us look you up, young feller," said the Judge at last, "and we're liable to do that very thing. If there's anything agin you we'll find it out. Remember that. We got that reputation."

"You've got plenty of gall, anyhow," observed Algernon, "and the county pays the expenses. So go to it. Burn up the wires and congest the mails. What you get on me won't help your reputation any."

There was no comeback to that, so the Judge smiled and put out his hand. Algernon had money and was worth cultivating, even tho he did appear to be honest.

"You are all right, Algernon, my boy," he said heartily. "We had to do our duty, you know. There's the roulette wheel and the faro tables, and here's the bar. Just make yourself at home. Nice looking gun you've got there."

"Yes, indeed!" beamed Algernon. "Made to order and set me back fifty-six iron men."

It was the trimmest little gun I ever saw; thirty-eight on a forty-four frame, nickeled to perfection, pearl handles, and not the fraction of an ounce extra weight anywhere.

The Judge gloated over it a while and handed it back. Algernon stood with his right forearm resting on the edge of the bar, and turning the gun in his hand to admire it. Then "Bang!" and a puff of feathers jumped from the head of Judge Peters' stuffed eagle back of the bar.

The Judge ducked, then comes up and examined his eagle. Algernon looked scared.

"You careless, pin-headed cuss!" bellowed the Judge. "You shot the eye square out of my eagle. Put up that gun or I'll wring your dog-gone neck."

"I—I'm sorry, Judge, awful sorry," whimpered Algernon. "It was an accident. Anybody could see that. I had the gun right down like this, and—and I guess I pushed the trigger a little too hard. Sort of fumbled. But I'll pay for the eagle, Judge. Would twenty be enough?"

"I guess so," said the Judge, cooling down some. "I shot that eagle myself, tho, and I wouldn't have sold it for a hundred. (The eagle was there when he bought the place and he would have sold it for five.) But," he added, "hereafter you be careful how you handle that gun. If you fumble again and push the trigger too hard I'll have you pushed in the coop and let you fumble with the law a while."

Algernon took out his roll again and peeled off another twenty; and the next was a twenty, too; I saw it. That seemed to satisfy the Judge that Algernon was a good, well-meaning fellow, so he set 'em up to the house to show he was a good fellow also.

After that Algernon cut out the big words and put in his time making friends. He could play the piano and sing a little, had the buck-and-wing down pat and was a jolly, good-natured sort of fellow all around. It wasn't long till he was a general favorite with the whole, and especially with the Stuffed Eagle habitues. At first he was Algernon, then Algie, then somebody hung on the "Accident," and after that he was Accident Algie to everybody.

He accepted the monicker in good spirit and seemed to think it a great joke. He patronized the bar enough to keep on the good side of the Judge; the roulette and faro tables enough to tantalize the sheriff and Snakey. To draw him on Snakey let him win enough to just about break even; but Algie never played more than five or ten dollars at a time. Then he would say he guessed his luck wasn't on the job that day and stroll off whistling or sit down at the piano and rattle out some jagtime.

However, his attitude toward Snakey puzzled me. Somehow or other he seemed to have it in for Snakey. When there was a crowd around he was all smiles and good humor; but I don't want anybody to look at me like he looked at Snakey when he thought nobody saw him. There was daggers, bayonets and dynamite in it.

One evening about two weeks after he came the usual crowd was gathered in the Stuffed Eagle, when Algie swung in, all smiles. Some of the men were taking a chance at the roulette and faro tables, half a dozen or so were playing poker, and old Uncle Jed Bender was having a game of solitaire at a small table in the rear.

Algie lined them all up and bought two drinks around. "This is my birthday," he explained, "and I always loosen up when I have a birthday. Drink hearty, boys."

The men emptied their glasses and returned to their interrupted games. Uncle Jed Bender shuffled back, smacking his lips, to his table in the rear and began to spread out his cards again. The way he sat he was in profile to us, and, except that he was smoking a huge cob pipe, his thin, upstanding hair, hooked nose and pointed chin gave him a

Snakey Jones Emitted a Sort of Smothered "Um-m-m," and Pitched Forward.

marked resemblance to Father Time.

Algie cocked a foot on the rail and an elbow on the bar.

"Well, Judge," he said, slapping the tanned holster, "I've been out practicing up a little with old sweetness here; and, believe me, I'm getting to be some little marksman."

"No," said Judge Peters, jestingly.

"Yes," said Algie. "Hit a tomato can at ten feet three times out of five. How's that?"

"Rotten," grinned the Judge. "Why, you done better than that the day you come. Shot the eye out of my eagle the first crack."

"Yes, but I didn't have any accidents today," laughed Algie. "There's something wrong with old sweetness, tho, Judge. She don't revolve right. Have a look at her."

Judge Peters took the gun and examined it. He threw out the cartridges, twirled the cylinder and snapped it a few times. Then he reloaded it and handed it back.

"She's all right now," he said. "Be careful how you handle her, son. We ain't got any more eagle eyes to be shot out."

"Don't you worry about me," said Algie. He took the gun and started to ram it down in its holster—and "Bang!" Uncle Jed Bender fell back against the wall, then tottered to his feet with his frazzle-ended pipestem clutched in his teeth.

I don't know just how it happened; but the holster must have caught the end of the barrel, tilting it up and bringing the trigger against his finger. Anyhow, that second fumble of Accident Algie's had busted old Uncle Jed's cob pipe to smithereens.

"You poor baby-brained, fumbling fool!" roared the Judge. "You've done it ag'in. Give me that gat."

He came 'round from behind the bar and took Algie's gun. The crowd woke up and swarmed about the poor boy like flies about a lump of sugar, threatening to mob him. Uncle Jed Bender pranced forward and popped a bony fist under his nose. Algie was scared stiff.

"I—I couldn't help it, boys," he said, almost crying. "Honest, I couldn't. It was an accident. My finger hung on the trigger and I sort of fumbled again. I'll pay for the pipe—I'll buy him all the pipes in town."

"Shut up!" ordered the Judge, "or I'll fumble your head with the bung starter. I've seen men let their guns go off accidentally before, but they didn't hit the smallest thing in the house every time. You're too dog-gone accurate with your accidents. Next time you'll kill somebody."

That seemed to settle the matter and Algie sneaked out and didn't show up for two days. When he did come back he was meekness itself. He didn't look at anybody. He went straight to the piano and thrummed out a funeral march, then crept out again.

I had to leave town that afternoon and didn't get back for almost a week. There must have been a family reunion in the meantime, for when I walked into the Stuffed Eagle on my return there sat Algie at the piano, smiling and tearing out ragtime as tho this whole sweet world belonged to him. Old sweetness was back on his hip, and Judge Peters was mopping the bar and swinging his shoulders in time to the music. I guessed right away that Algie had slipped the Judge and the sheriff each a twenty.

Things went along nice and smooth for a time after that. Dude Warren had been spending the summer and some easy-come money in San Francisco, and got back about six weeks after Algie arrived. He walked into the Stuffed Eagle, shook hands with the Judge and called up the house.

Business had been languishing for an hour or so and there were only five of us present at the time. Accident Algie thrumming softly on the piano, Snakey Jones whirling his roulette wheel and humming a little tune of his own, and myself and a cattle buyer from Kansas City, who was figuring on a bunch of steers I wanted to turn into cash.

Judge Peters introduced Dude to the cattle buyer and Algie.

"Dude, this kid is the original accident," laughed the Judge; and told the prosecutor about those two fumbles of Accident Algie's that had put the eagle and Uncle Jed's cob on the blink.

"Great!" laughed Dude, "great! Is he a member of the fraternity?"

"Well, no—not exactly," replied the Judge. "The absence of his past-history sort of disqualifies him. We've made him an honorary member, tho, and maybe later on we can confer a full degree.

"Show Mister Warren old sweetness, son," he went on. "But handle with care. Prettiest little gun you ever saw, Dude."

Dude Warren was something of a gun fancier himself. He had a varied collection in his office, ranging all the way from the twenty-two to the cannon variety, and from the old flint lock to the latest automatic. Guns were his hobby. It was said of him that he would pay almost any price for an antiquated weapon of unusual model or history, or an elaborately ornamented one, history, make and age not considered.

At the first look at old sweetness his eyes lit with admiration. "Beaut! Peacherino!" he said, throwing it down here and there on imaginary targets. "Balance perfect. Want to sell it, kid?"

"No, siree!" informed Algie. "Me and old sweetness are just like a pair of legs. We couldn't get along without each other."

"Aw, come now," pleaded Dude. "You would sell. Set a price."

"She's not for sale, friend," returned Algie, "at any price. I could have a carload made like her on the outside, but not one in a thousand would be like her on the inside. Just give old sweetness a description of the thing you want to hit and pull the trigger. She'll do the rest."

"So I've noticed," grinned the Judge. "And sometimes she don't even need a description."

By this time the cattle buyer had bought another round and the glasses were empty. Snakey Jones returned to his wheel and began to spin it and hum his tune. This was a habit with Snakey when business was slow. Dude was still admiring the gun.

"Well, of course if you won't sell, you won't," he regretted. "But any time you need money worse than you need that gun, let me know."

"Sure." Algie reached for the gun. "I'll give you first cnance."

"Handle that like it was a ripe egg, son," cautioned Judge Peters. "We don't want any more fumbles round here. Third time's the charm."

Algie took the gun, held back the hammer with his thumb and turned the cylinder to make sure the plunger sat on an empty.

"Rest easy, old scout," he said with an air of confidence. "Twice is enough for me. I've been practicing up some, and I——"

"Bang!"

Snakey Jones emitted a sort of smothered "Um-m-m," clawed at his chest with both hands and pitched forward across his roulette wheel. Judge Peters' idle jest about the third time being the charm, was not so idle after all. That old saw had earned its right of existence. Accident Algie's third fumble had sent a bullet squarely thru Snakey's heart.

The next few minutes were a veritable riot. Judge Peters jumped over the bar, took Algie's gun and slapped his face. The sheriff came running in from the back room where he'd been taking a nap and placed him under arrest. Dude Warren whipped out a memorandum book and began to jot down notes. But this time Algie was as cool as a snow man. He wasn't flustrated in the least.

When the undertaker had Snakey's remains in hand, Algie turned to the county officials and said coolly:

"You fellows are just making fools of yourselves. You can't convict a man for an accident. Shucks! you can't even arrest me, lawfully."

Judge Peters kept a frazzled old volume of Blackstone on a shelf back of the bar for a bluff. I doubt if he ever looked between the covers. He didn't know any more about law than a cat knows about the catechism.

"What about it, Dude?" queried the Judge. "He says we can't convict him ——" Algie sidled closer and something passed from his hand to the Judge's that looked like a big slice of his roll. "And come to think of it," the Judge went on with scarcely a break, "I guess he's right. A man ain't responsible for an accident." He shot a wink at Dude and the sheriff. "What's your opinion?"

Of course they regretted Snakey's sudden demise, and were sore enough to hang Algie. Snakey was a valuable asset and would be hard to replace. But they knew the cattle buyer and me had seen the whole thing, and that we knew it was an accident, pure and simple. Anyhow they had most of Algie's roll, which they thought we didn't know, so I suppose they thought the best thing to do was to straightway absolve him and chase him out of town. After a moment's reflection, Dude said:

"He's right, Judge. We couldn't convict him."

"That's so," agreed the sheriff. "Be a waste of time to try it."

"Thank you, gentlemen, thank you," beamed Algie. "I knew you were on the square. You're good old scouts, all of you. And now all I ask is that you give me my gun and let me leave town. I've done all the shooting round here I want to do."

"Leave town is right," said the Judge. "You beat us to it, sonny. Go saddle your horse and ride up there to the door and I'll give you your gun. Not before. I don't intend to take any more chances with this old carcass of mine, and I guess the rest of the boys feel the same way about it."

Algie thanked them again and went out. Ten minutes later he rode up to the door and received his gun.

"Well, good-by, friends," he said, bowing and lifting his hat. "You've played square with me and I won't forget it." Then he raked his horse's flanks and sped northward in a cloud of dust.

Along in the early part of November I shipped a couple cars of steers to Kansas City and went along with them. It was unusually warm for that time of year, and a Wild West show was finishing the season with a three-day stand. So one afternoon, being sort of lonesome and homesick, I went.

It was in a big open tent, and one of the features was a crack revolver shot who rode at a gallop and broke glass balls thrown into the air. He'd race the width of the tent, getting five balls on the way over; then reload as he wheeled and get five more on the way back. It was worth the price of the show to see him handle that gun. He was a wonder.

Then when he'd finished his stunt he started galloping round the ring, bowing and lifting his hat. And, say, you could have blown me over with a contented sigh! 'He was Accident Algie.

On my way out I hunted up one of the showmen. "Who's your crack shot?" I asked. "He's great."

"Best in the world," he answered. "That's Charlie Grimes—Crack Shot Charlie, we call 'im. Used to be two of 'em—brothers—but the other one got mixed up in a faro game in Cheyenne a year or so ago and the croupier got 'im when he wasn't lookin'."

That last sentence gave me a start.

"Know this croupier's name?" I asked him.

"Fellow they called Snakey Jones," he said.

* * *

Plenty for a Lion.

SHE was a very ardent admirer of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and she was woefully fat. She paid a visit to the zoo, and her eagle eye spied a keeper feeding the lions. She was surprised at the amount of meat each lion received.

"Surely," she said to the attendant, "that is a very small piece of meat for the lion!"

The keeper's eyes twinkled.

"It may seem a small piece to you, mum, but it's heaps for the lion," he said.

* * *

Easier to Part With.

LITTLE Denis, out for a walk with mother, noticed a poor, ragged little urchin.

"Yes, dear," said mother. "That poor little boy has no father to give him toys and things, like you have. Wouldn't you like to do something for him? Wouldn't you like to give him your rabbit?"

Denis thought a moment, and then suggested:

"I'd rather give him father!"

* * *

Quite a Demand for Her Kind.

A VISITOR to the household of a colored man in Georgia was much impressed by the thriftiness of the mistress of the house. "That's a hard workin' wife you've got, Joe," said he. "Yes," said Joe, with the utmost gravity, "I wish I had a couple more like her."

THE YELLOW ROADSTER

By Vesta Stevens

"Oh, My Poor Hat!" She Groaned as She Looked at That Object in the Man's Hand.

Betty wanted a yellow roadster, but a bear of an old employer refused to raise her husband's salary until, one day, he met Betty under unusual circumstances.

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"OH! MY hat," the girl shrieked, as the wind caught her hat and sent it spinning up Fifth avenue.

A man and a couple of delivery boys dashed wildly after it, but it flew along like a thing possessed.

It hesitated for a fraction of a second in its mad career, and as a policeman triumphantly reached out a foot the better to secure it, a yellow roadster swung 'round the corner and stopped—just too late.

The hat disappeared.

The man in the car sprang out and, groping under it, finally brought forth what was left of the smart little bit of head-gear.

By this time Betty had arrived on the scene of action, her fluffy hair windblown and her smooth young cheeks filled with a lovely color. Tears of vexation and embarrassment stood in her eyes.

"Oh! my poor hat," she groaned, as she looked at that object torn and soiled in the man's hand.

"I am sorry," he said, "I was right on it before I realized it."

"It wasn't your fault, but—but what on earth shall I do——" she stopped, conscious all at once that she was the center of a curious crowd. It came over her suddenly that she had never seen so many pairs of eyes in her whole life.

"Oh! dear," she said faintly, and looking at the man appealingly. He opened the door of the car.

"Jump in," he said quickly, "we'll get out of this crowd."

Betty needed no second invitation. Holding the cause of all the trouble tightly clinched in one small hand, she jumped in, and they sped down the avenue for a block or two, then turned into a more quiet street. The man drew up to the curb and stopped. Betty with a few deft little pokes and pats had succeeded in getting the hat into some kind of shape, and jamming it down on her head, stood up.

"Thank you very much," she said, reaching for the catch of the door.

"Just a moment," the man laid a detaining hand on her sleeve; "sit down again, won't you?"

Betty sat down and looked inquiringly toward him.

"I'm sorry about your hat. Somehow I feel as if I were more or less to blame. Is it quite spoiled?"

"It's hopeless, but then it might have been worse; it wasn't a new one, thank goodness."

"It's tremendously becoming."

Betty blushed and drew a mirror from her bag. "Heavens, what a fright I am," she pouted bewitchingly at her own reflection.

The man smiled. "I think you are altogether charming."

Betty's eyes swept him haughtily from head to foot, taking note at the same time, however, of his handsome face, the brown hair just tinged with gray at the temples—and his eyes. But in spite of them, her voice was quite cold, as she said:

"I mustn't detain you any longer. Will you kindly open the door?"

"Oh! I say, don't be cross, please. I wonder—I wonder if you would be frightfully indignant if I should ask you to—lunch with me, just as a sort of recompense for all the damage I have done. Will you? Or maybe you have lunched; in that case we might have tea."

"Tea at 2:30!" Betty wrinkled her little nose disdainfully. "But, to tell you the truth, I haven't lunched. I was on my way to Sherry's when your stupid—when your car spoiled everything."

"Lunching alone?"

"Yes, I was giving myself a party."

"May I come?"

"Oh! I wouldn't go there now for anything."

"Where shall we go?"

"We?"

"Surely you wouldn't leave me now, hungry and with an uneasy conscience."

Betty laughed, showing two rows of even white teeth. "I suppose it would serve you right if I did go."

"It would, just right. Where shall it be?"

"That I'll have to leave to you. I can't go any place around here in this thing." She touched her hat disgustedly.

"By Jove, I have a brilliant idea."

Betty raised her delicate eyebrows. "Really!" she remarked.

The man threw back his head and laughed. "My diggings are just a few blocks away. I was coming from there when I—when the gates of Paradise opened and gave me a peep inside."

"Meaning?"

"When I met you. But I was going to say why not come there. You can brush up a bit if you like, and then we'll go up the road. Or we can stop there and lunch—whatever your Ladyship wishes."

Betty hesitated. "O-h," she breathed, the spirit of adventure gleaming in her eye.

"Do come, there isn't a bit of harm. Yosi, my man, will be our chaperon."

"W-e-l-l, I suppose that would be the most sensible thing to do, under the circumstances. I could make my hat a bit more presentable, couldn't I? Have you a needle and thread?"

"Not with me, but——"

Betty chuckled. "Silly," she said.

The man turned the car and once more they started uptown. "How do you like my little wagon?" he asked after a moment, "I only got it yesterday."

"It's a beauty, color and everything. I'd love to go awfully fast."

"Take care I don't go so fast I can't stop."

"Is that a threat?"

"I should like nothing better than to run off with you." He smiled into her eyes.

Betty's heart gave an uncomfortable leap and she wished herself well out of this mad suggestion. The car stopped before she had a chance for further reflection, and she was lifted out bodily and stood on her feet in the entrance of an imposing apartment house.

At the third floor the elevator stopped and the man touched a button. A door was noiselessly opened and Betty found herself in a great luxuriously furnished room.

"Oh! how wonderful," she exclaimed, with just the faintest tremble in her voice, "what a charming place."

The man came toward her and, lifting off her hat, laid it on a table. "There we are. Now make yourself quite at home, while I see what Yosi can give us for——"

Betty held out her hand impulsively. "Thank you just the same," she said, "but I don't believe I'll stay after all."

"N-o—why, what's the trouble? Not afraid, are you?"

"Oh! no, no indeed. But it's getting late, and——"

He smiled down at her from his six feet one. "Little quitter," he whispered.

"I'm not." Betty was indignant, and threw herself into a chair with a hasty glance at the tiny watch on her wrist. "But it's after 3 and I'm starving, and a long way from home."

"We'll attend to one, and talk about the other—later."

He gave a few orders and in an incredibly short time they were seated at a table for two.

She shook her head at the cocktail, but the wine did look delicious. "Cool and sizzly," she said, and the glasses were "so ducky." Yes, she would have a little.

The man held his up to the light for a second. Then, looking at her, "Here's to our getting better acquainted," he said, laying his hand on hers, "I——"

"Are you married?" Betty interrupted, the probability occurring to her for the first time.

"N—o, but I was—once."

"O—h! Did she—die?" all sympathy now.

"No, indeed: she's very much alive. She married my ex-secretary last month."

"O—h!" plainly shocked.

"Let's talk about you," he said, anxious to change the subject; "tell me, where do you live?"

"At—Bagato."

"Bagato!"

"Y-e-s," with a sigh, "it's a long story."

"Do tell me."

Betty took another sip of wine. "It's just the same old thing, we haven't much money, you see, and we do so want a little roadster—like yours. So my husband—did I tell you I was married?"

"No, you didn't mention that little matter."

"Well," continuing seriously, "my husband said if I was willing to live out of town for a while we could save and when he got his next increase in salary, at Christmas, we would buy the little car. We moved out, but at Christmas he didn't get the raise."

"N—o?"

"No. He waited to see if they would say anything, then he went to the head of the firm, he's with Hamilton's linen house, and asked for it, and what do you think that stingy old thing said?"

"I can't imagine."

"That owing to the war they had decided not to increase their salary list. Well, I was furious. There I was stranded in Bagato. Have you ever been there?"

"No," with a grateful sigh.

"It's—it's horrid. So poky, and I have to ride in a stuffy old train, for my poor little yellow roadster is as far away as ever." Tears glistened in her eyes.

The man got up and went around to her chair.

"Dear little girl," he murmured, his lips brushing her soft hair, "I wish I could give you the little car. Somehow I can't picture you in a stuffy old train, as you express it. You should be tucked away in a satin-lined jewel case. You were made for—love."

Betty stirred uneasily and the color rushed to her face. She was irresistible, and before she realized what was happening she was swung out of her chair and crushed in the man's strong arms.

"Kiss me," he whispered, his face close to hers.

Betty was thoroly frightened now and she struggled frantically. "Let me go—let me go," she cried.

Then quite suddenly she ceased to resist, and, leaning her head against his arm, began to cry softly.

The man drew back with a start. "Good God," he said, with white lips; then he patted her shoulder soothingly. "There, there, don't cry. It's all right, little——"

"Betty," she prompted tearfully.

In spite of himself, he smiled, a tender little smile as he rested his hand on her bowed head. "Come, little Betty, repair the damage and I'll run you down to the ferry in the fatal yellow roadster."

She lifted her head then and looked into his eyes. She was satisfied, evidently, with what she saw, for she dabbed away the tears childishly and went over to a mirror, the inevitable powder puff in her hand.

"It serves me right," she said after a moment, "I shouldn't have come here. It has taught me a lesson."

"You're right, my dear. You shouldn't have come and I shouldn't have brought you. We have both learned something, little Betty, but please promise me you'll never take a chance like this again—will you?"

"I—I promise," she answered solemnly.

"You're a wonderful little woman and your husband is a lucky man, my dear. By the way, you haven't told me his name. Mayn't I know?"

"Of course, I forgot. Richard Fields. Dicky, I call him." There was a caress in her voice.

The man looked away. "Ah!" was all he said.

The ride to the ferry was almost a silent one. Betty was still a good deal upset by her unusual experience, and the man—who can say what his feelings were?

"Oh, there's my boat. I must fly." Betty sprang lightly to the ground, scarcely waiting for the car to come to a stop.

"Good-by, Mr. ——" she hesitated, embarrassed. "Why, I don't know your name."

"Mine?—Oh! I'm 'that stingy old thing!'"

"Good Lord," cried Betty. Then she laughed.

"Not 'stingy old thing,'" she called over her shoulder as she turned away, "dear old thing," and she wafted him a kiss from the tips of her fingers.

It was almost a week later, when one evening Dicky burst into the tiny living room, his boyish face aglow with excitement.

"Bet, old girl," he cried, "guess what's happened? I've got my raise."

Something on the floor just then required Betty's immediate attention, so her voice was not quite distinct when she answered and her face very red when she stood up, but her husband was too absorbed in the story of their good fortune to notice.

"And," he went on, "what else do you think? The boss himself called me into his office this morning—he's a rum old bird, Bet—and said he had been watching me for some time, and thought I deserved the raise. And, besides that, said he had just heard I was married—now who the deuce could have told him? He asked where we lived and I up and told him every darn thing, including the yellow roadster. I nearly dropped dead when he slapped me on the shoulder. 'Fields,' he said, 'evidently you've got a game little wife. Take good care of her, young man, and here,' and he drew a bill from his pocket, 'here is a little something. Tell her to—to get a motor-hat with my compliments.' Well, by George, Betty, I was speechless. It was a hundred dollars. Motor-hat indeed, I said to myself, that goes toward the yellow peril. Why, sweetheart, that makes nearly nine hundred we've got already."

"Going up!" said Betty slangily, as she lifted her pretty face to be kissed.

* * *

No Cause for Tears.

A NEW YORK lawyer tells of a man who had been convicted of stealing by a certain "Down East" Judge, well known for his tenderness.

"Have you ever been sentenced to imprisonment?" asked the Judge, not unkindly.

"Never!" exclaimed the prisoner, suddenly bursting into tears.

"Well, well, don't cry, my man," said his honor, consolingly, "you're going to be now."

* * *

Tame Fish.

THE enthusiastic angler was telling some friends about a proposed fishing trip to a lake in Colorado which he had in contemplation.

"Are there any trout out there?" asked one friend.

"Thousands of 'em," replied the angler.

"Will they bite easily?" asked another friend.

"Will they? Why, they're absolutely vicious. A man has to hide behind a tree to bait his hook."

* * *

A Woman's Work.

THE war-working wife of the Tommy at the front was very terse with the "nosey" lady representing some committee or other.

"Oh, you needn't worry yourself," she said, "we're both doing our bit. He's bearing arms and I'm baring mine!"

Concluding

The Quarterbreed

By Robert Ames Bennet

Review of the Story

CAPTAIN HARDY, U. S. A., newly appointed agent of an Indian reservation in the Northwest, comes on the scene just as Dupont, a trader, his daughter Marie and Vandervyn, assistant agent, are having a fracas with the Indians. After the Indians have been dispersed thru quick thinking on his part, Hardy proceeds to the Agency and takes up his duties. There he discovers that things are not as they should be. He catches Dupont's punchers and Redbear, a half-breed interpreter, in the act of defrauding the Government on cattle, and, to the surprise and chagrin of Vandervyn, manages to disarm the three rowdy punchers and send them about their own business, after righting the matter. After giving Redbear another chance to redeem himself because of his sister who is dependent on him, Hardy goes to dinner at Dupont's on Marie's invitation. There, he learns thru his drunken host, who oversteps himself, how the whites are despoiling the Indians. On the next morning when the chiefs and headsmen of the tribe, whom Hardy has summoned, gather at the Agency. Vandervyn tells Redbear to misinterpret Hardy's remarks. This he does with the result that bad blood is stirred up. After inducing Redbear to consent to keeping his common law marriage with Oinna a secret, Vandervyn starts to the mountains for further interviews with the Indians. In the meantime Dupont urges his daughter to be kind to Hardy, and she goes riding with him on several occasions. On one of their trips Hardy is shot, and when he wakes up he finds Marie bending over him. He then tells her that he loves her and wishes to marry her. She takes him into her own home and cares for him, and in the meantime informs Vandervyn of what has happened. He urges his love on her, but says nothing of marriage, and the girl puts him off. Hardy recovers from his wound, but it is impossible to find the would-be assassin. Hardy determines to go to the mountains himself to see what he can do with the tribes. Dupont, Redbear, Vandervyn and Marie, together with a squad of police, set out. There is another attempt on Hardy's life, but he escapes, and wounds his assailant. After looking around to find who it was, he loses his way and wanders into the Indians' camp, where, thru the aid of Oinna, he makes friends with the Indians. When he rides back to his own camp, he finds that Charlie Redbear has been assailed by the same Indian who shot at him, but that he is not seriously wounded. Dupont tries to drive a bargain with him, shows him thru the mine, and both barely miss losing their lives there. Marie gives her promise to Vandervyn, who makes desperate love to her, and thruout the council with the Indian chiefs, when the mine agreement is being drawn up, Vandervyn acts as the conqueror towards Hardy. In the meantime, Hardy catches Vandervyn trying to enter Oinna's shack during the night, and prevents this. At the council it is decided that the Indians send representatives to Washington, and Vandervyn leaves with them. When he is gone Hardy and Marie take up their old companionship. Hardy again tells her that he loves her, but does not press his suit, telling her that he is waiting for the time when Vandervyn will return. After some time, the commissioners, the Indians who went to Washington, and Vandervyn return. At a dinner at Dupont's home, Vandervyn announces his engagement to Marie, and thereby stuns Hardy. Shortly afterward Hardy is ordered to his post in the State of Washington, but instead of leaving enters the list as contestant for the mine, after resigning his commission. On his way to the station he comes upon Redbear and his sister. As he is trying to make Redbear understand that Vandervyn means no good by Oinna, Vandervyn himself comes up, and after a quarrel with Redbear shoots him. He then enters the race, and after the first hour or two only he and Hardy are left in the race for the mine.

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The First Sight of Her Bewildered Him, and—He Saw That She Was With Vandervyn.

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CHAPTER XXVI.

STARK COURAGE.

WHEN the mocking trickster came up behind Hardy, he reined in to a jog trot, and, as before, rode past him with his hand on his hip.

There were marked differences between the third pinto and the two first. He was taller and leaner, and one of his feet was white. But Hardy appeared to be too dejected to heed the fact. He bent over his pommel in an attitude of sullen despair, and barely glanced up as Vandervyn passed. He had the despondent look and air of one who is hopelessly beaten.

As the pinto ambled away in the lead, Vandervyn smiled, and looked back at his rival with all the hate gone from his face. The mare could not possibly overtake him, much less outrun the fresh pinto all the way to the mine. His look showed only boyish exultance.

"By-by again, old man," he bantered. "Sorry I can't stay to keep you company. The lady is waiting—and the mine. It may also please you to hear that I have a duly signed and witnessed contract with the tribe, giving me a fee of twenty per cent on all moneys appropriated in payment to the tribe for their mineral lands. Let's hear you congratulate me. Show you're game!"

But Hardy did not raise his eyes. He held the weary, tho still willing, mare to a walk. When he came to the foot of the very steep climb up the ridge of the broken-topped montain, he slipped to the ground, and started to lead the mare.

Vandervyn was already well up the slope. He reached the castellated rocks at the top of the ridge before Hardy had plodded up the first half of the ascent. He turned about to wave his hat, but as Hardy paid no attention to him, he soon turned his pinto back into the trail and rode on around the castellated rocks.

Hardy led the mare on up to the shelf of rock where, during his first trip, his abrupt dismounting had saved him from Redbear's bullet. There he stopped the mare, and dropped back alongside her. From above he would have appeared to be leaning upon her withers in an attitude of despair. In reality, his shapely mouth was curved in a resolute smile, and the hand hidden by his head and shoulders was rapidly transferring articles from the saddlebags to his pockets—three or four little packets of food, a pocket ax, a handful of pistol cartridges, and the legal notices for posting a mining claim.

He glanced up the slope, and, seeing no sign of Vandervyn, stripped off the mare's bridle. When he had fastened it to the saddle, he sponged out her nostrils and mouth with the last water in his canteen, and headed her along the ridge to a little patch of bunchgrass. She understood, and began to graze, but as she munched the rich grass she frequently raised her head to watch her master climb the steep slope of the broken-topped mountain.

Hardy took the ascent at an unhurried pace that wasted no time or energy in useless movements and mistaken leads. He reached the place where he had found the bloody trail of Redbear. Up the cleft the climbing was not so stiff. He came out above the gap, and picked a cleft on the opposite side that led thru to the far slope of the mountain. This time he had neither the dusk nor the thought of following the assassin to mislead him.

On the way down the cleft he had to descend two dangerous ledges. But carefulness and cool judgment brought him to the foot of each without a fall. He came out on the valley slope, extremely hot and dry but not out of breath. Drawing an air-line across to the opposite mountainside where he had seen the light of Ti-owa-konza's camp fire thru the darkness, he started down into the valley at a jog trot as brisk as that of the third pinto.

By the time he came to the stream he was parched and gasping from heat and thirst. He plunged his head into the water, rinsed out his mouth three or four times, took a single sip, and started on, refreshed. The ascent to the site of Ti-owa-konza's camp again parched him. He was almost spent as he tottered thru the pines up the last slope. The camp was gone, but he knew the nearest way to the spring.

He rested two or three minutes, repeatedly cooling his head in the spring and rinsing out his mouth, but drinking only a very few sips. Again refreshed, he half filled his canteen, and started on up the easy mountain-slope at a steady jog.

Ten minutes brought him over the summit to the sharp pitch above the mine. Smoke was rising from the stovepipe of the cabin. He stared down at the terrace several moments, however, before he made out the figures of a man and woman waiting at the first turn of the trail. There could be no doubt that the two were Marie and her father. It was no less certain that Vandervyn had not yet arrived. Even had he suspected his opponent's stratagem, he scarcely could have covered the seven miles of trail in as short a time as Hardy had taken to make the three miles across country.

The two watchers never thought to look about and up the mountain. Hardy started to zigzag down the roof-like pitch of the mountainside to the spur along which he had traced the apex of the mineral vein from the top of the mine shaft. He made the descent without slipping and without dislodging any stones. The watchers had not yet looked about when he came down upon the crest of the spur.

A large newly cut stake, set up conspicuously on its head, gave him a hint where one of the upper corners of the claim should be located. He cut his own stake from a branch of the nearest pine with his razor-edged pocket-ax, drove it into the ground with a stone, and tacked on one of his legal notices. He then paced across to where another stake indicated the proper place for the other upper corner, and swiftly repeated the making of his own stake and posting of the notice.

He hastened to the curb of the mine-shaft and posted another notice. He was now in plain view from the cabin, but out of sight of the watchers down on the trail. He descended to the terrace to post his two remaining notices at the corners so obligingly located by Dupont. He was careful to pick out a green branch for his first stake. Yet the soft thudding of his ax-blows must have reached the watchers.

As he was working the stake into a bed of loose rocks, he heard an angry exclamation over near the cabin. Dupont and Marie had come around the end of the building, and were staring at him, the girl in wide-eyed amazement, her father in astonished chagrin that burst into rage as Hardy glanced up. In a frenzy of disappointed avarice, the trader reached for his revolver. Still more swiftly Marie flung herself upon him.

"No! No! You shall not!" she cried. "Leave it to him—he is so near! Let them play out the game!"

Hardy was stooping to tack his notice to the stake. He caught up his ax, and ran across to cut his last stake. Between the ax-blows could be heard the hoof-beats of a galloping horse. He trimmed the stake. The hoof-beats now sounded very near. He tacked the notice on the stake and looked around for a stone. There was none at hand. He chopped a small hole with his ax in the hard soil and set up the stake.

At that moment Vandervyn loped up over the edge of the terrace, waving his hat to Marie. Then he caught sight of Hardy, over beyond the girl, and the exultant yell died on his lips. He put the curb on his pony, and sprang off beside Dupont and the girl, his face frightful with rage.

His voice was high-pitched and light, almost airy: "So—he cut across afoot! He thought to do me!"

"Has, you mean!" snarled Dupont. "Got his notices posted. That's his last stake."

Vandervyn whirled, and snatched his rifle from its saddle-sheath. Marie caught her father's arm to drag him aside; but he was already backing away, his eyes fixed apprehensively on Hardy. It was time for bullets to come streaming from the automatic pistol. Hardy could have drawn and opened fire while Vandervyn was freeing his rifle.

To the astonishment of all three, Hardy made no attempt to "get the drop" on his opponent. Instead, he started to advance upon Vandervyn at a quick, deliberate pace, his hands hanging empty at his sides, his face calm and stern.

"Put down that gun!" he commanded.

Vandervyn was leveling the rifle. He took aim straight between Hardy's eyes. His finger kissed the trigger. The slightest twitch would have sent the bullet crashing thru Hardy's brain, and the slightest sign of fear or hesitancy on Hardy's part would have caused that twitch. He was looking death in the face. Vandervyn was in a murderous fury.

Yet Hardy came on—quick, steady, absolutely calm. His gaze passed above the deadly muzzle, along the foreshortened barrel, to the narrow-lidded bloodshot eyes of Vandervyn. His voice rang out again, clear and sharp with authority:

"Put down that rifle—put it down, sir!"

The muscles of Vandervyn's neck twitched. Along the top of the barrel he was glaring back at Hardy—glaring into those hazel eyes that met his fury with the clear cool gaze of absolute courage. The sheer nerve of that steady approach to his rifle muzzle compelled him to pause. It disconcerted him; it struck a chill into the heat of his frenzy.

Still Hardy advanced, swift and steady, his gaze never so much as flickering. Now his eyes and forehead, close beyond the foresight of the rifle, appeared enormously enlarged to Vandervyn's distorted vision. Steadily Hardy put up his hand, took hold of the rifle barrel, and turned the muzzle aside.

"Ah-h-h!" gasped Marie.

Hardy drew the rifle out of Vandervyn's relaxing grasp.

"Stand aside, sir!" he quietly commanded. "I wish to speak alone with Miss Dupont."

Vandervyn had parted with his rifle as if dazed. At the sound of Hardy's voice a fresh wave of crimson flooded his face. He stepped back, and jerked out his revolver. Hardy leaped upon him like a panther, and struck the weapon aside. The heavy bullet whizzed past Hardy's head. A moment later, Vandervyn, tho the younger and perhaps the stronger of the two, reeled away, clutching his lacerated trigger finger.

Hardy stood with the revolver in his hand. He turned to Marie.

"May I ask for a few words alone with you?"

"No!" Vandervyn hoarsely forbade the girl. "You shall not speak with him. Jake, you're her father—tell her she shall not."

"You know she don't never mind what I say," mumbled Dupont. "Anyway, it sort of looks like Cap is running this here shindy."

Hardy had not glanced away from Marie. Thruout that supreme test of the will-power and courage of her two lovers, she had stood tense and silent, as if spellbound. She now looked from one to the other, her face inscrutably calm, her black eyes fathomless.

"I will hear what Captain Hardy has to say," she said.

Hardy motioned her father and Vandervyn toward the mine-dump. They obeyed.

"We are alone," said Marie.

Hardy smiled. "I won the race."

"Was it fair, cutting across country?" she asked.

"Fair? Then you did not know of his scheme."

"What scheme? I do not understand."

"It does not now matter. I won the race and—the mine."

"Do you expect me to rejoice with you?" asked the girl. "It has cost my father his half of the mine."

"How so? He is not an entryman."

"Reggie gave him a deed to a half-interest."

"I see," said Hardy. "Quite in keeping. The deed is absolutely void, and would have been no less so even had the grantor been first to reach here."

"You doubt his good faith!" The girl glanced past him toward the sullen figure of Vandervyn on the mine-dump with her father. "So you thought it better to take it all yourself than to let him take it all?"

"Yes," agreed Hardy.

The girl's red lips curved in an ironical smile.

"I do not go with the mine—necessarily."

"No. But the mine necessarily goes with you—now," replied Hardy.

"Be so kind as to explain. I understood that you were ordered to Alaska."

"Were you not told of my return as far as the butte?"

"Then your orders to leave were countermanded." Marie evaded the question.

His eyes darkened, and his face contracted as if from a twinge of pain. But he replied with quiet steadiness: "That is of no consequence. May I ask if you consider my word good?"

"Yes." The answer was given without an instant's hesitation.

He smiled gravely. "You cannot think I came back to win the mine for myself. You have my word that I will assign it to you as soon as I have the legal right."

"To me? But why?" The dilating eyes of the girl showed her utter surprise and astonishment. "Why? There, that last night at the Agency, you showed that you despised me."

"Never that," he disclaimed. "I was bitter—harsh. But the suddenness of the discovery that you and he— Let us not talk of that. It is past. I would not have come back to trouble you, only——" Again he stopped. "I had to come back and do this thing. It was necessary that you should become owner of this mine—sole owner. It is to be yours, not his. Promise me that you will never give him any share in it. That is all I ask."

"I will not promise unless you tell me your reason for asking it, and unless you tell me your reason for doing what you have done."

Hardy whitened. "Very well, then. It is simply this: If you own the mine, he will wish to marry you."

"If I— But he already wishes to——" The girl hesitated, and fell silent, her black eyebrows bent in thought.

"I do not seek to persuade you to the contrary," said Hardy. "All I ask is that you give me your promise to allow him no share in the mine."

Marie looked down. After a silence she answered in a low tone: "I promise."

"That is all," he said. "I must now be going."

"Wait," she urged. "You have not told me why—why you have done this."

"Is it necessary?" he replied. "Please do not fancy it is because I am at all unselfish. You have promised yourself to him. Knowing that I no longer had even a fighting chance, I have merely sought to make sure that he—that you should have at least a fair opportunity to be happy. That is all."

He lingered a moment for a last look at her beautiful face, upon which had fallen the inscrutable stolidity of the Indian in her nature. No other expression could have so completely confirmed him in his belief that he had lost his fighting chance to win her. He faced about to return up the mountain the way he had come.

Marie stood as he left her, silent and immobile, following his brisk ascent up the path to the mine-shaft with a wide-eyed gaze that perceived the objective image, yet at the same time seemed to be looking inward. A purpling that shaded the blue-blackness of her eyes to violet-black alone betrayed the intensity of her emotion.

The receding figure had passed along the spur to the foot of the steep ascent up the mountain before the girl became aware that Vandervyn was close beside her. He started to pass behind, to where Hardy had dropped the rifle and revolver. In a flash of swift movement she sprang ahead of him and set her foot upon the rifle barrel.

"You shall not."

Her voice was low and seemingly tranquil, her face as stolid as before, but the look in her eyes made him hesitate. He glanced about at Dupont. The trader had turned his back on Hardy, and was staring fixedly into the valley at a party of Indians that had come down the far side and were pitching their camp in the meadow. It was evident that he did not propose to be a witness to anything Vandervyn might do.

"Mon pere," quietly called Marie.

He shot a startled glance at her, hesitated, and came over to them. Vandervyn's eyes were upturned to the figure on the mountainside in a look of hate that was not pleasant to see. Dupont followed the menacing stare, and then glanced away as if caught in a guilty act. Fast as Hardy was scaling the ascent, he was still within easy rifle-shot and would continue to be for several minutes.

Vandervyn moistened his dry lips, and muttered hoarsely: "Take her into the cabin. She—won't let me—do it."

Dupont coughed, and spoke in a husky voice. "Come into the cabin, Marie."

"No," she replied.

"But listen, girl," he urged. "No one won't never know, and we won't be looking. We can lay it on that same buck Indian what has tried to git him twice a'ready. There's a lot of 'em just come into the valley—— Don't look at me that way. The dirty sneak has took our mine away from us—he done it by a trick, cutting 'cross afoot. Mr. Van can't afford to marry you if me and him don't git the mine."

"What if I should get it?" asked the girl, with no shade of change in her inscrutable calm.

Vandervyn whirled upon her, his face convulsed with jealous fury. "So that's it! You've sold yourself to him. You——" He stopped, silenced by her look.

After a pause she quietly remarked: "He gives me the mine. He is going away, I do not know where. Instead of [illegible] I am to be the owner of the mine. [illegible] you wish to marry me?"

CHAPTER XXVII.

WEDDING POSTPONED.

VANDERVYN'S face darkened with suspicion. "If you're not playing me, then he has lied to you, in order to get away from us."

Marie's lips curved in a half-smile. "He gave me his word of honor. Do you doubt it?"

The young man's jaw dropped slack. He could not even pretend to doubt her statement or Hardy's word. He looked down, his brows knotted and eyes contracted with intense thought.

Dupont took the news in a far different manner.

"By Gar!" he exulted. "He's going to give you the mine? You're dead sure of it? By Gar! I call that mighty square of Cap. It's white! And me a-thinking he done it all to git back at us. It sure is white of Cap. Why, it's nearly the same like he had give it to me!"

"He named only one condition," remarked Marie.

Vandervyn started, and looked up at her. She met him with a level glance that told nothing of what she was thinking.

"One condition," she repeated. "It was my promise not to give you any share in the mine."

"Me?" queried Dupont.

"No."

"I see," threatened Vandervyn. "He thinks to force you from having anything to do with me."

"On the contrary, he seemed to think it would—not prevent our marrying."

Vandervyn stared in bewilderment. Hardy's action seemed incredible. Then he thought he perceived the explanation, and rallied from his perplexity. His frown gave place to a cynical smile.

"O-ho, my lady! I see. You worked him with the soft pedal—the saphead! the easymark! He's just the kind of duffer to fall for the wail of a pretty girl with a tear in her eye and a quaver in her throat. Good for you, sweetheart! You beat him at his own game. He tried a bluff, thinking you'd be silly enough to throw me over for him. You called him, and he had to make good. The fool—to think you'd be soft enough to turn from me to him, just because he made a play to the galleries with his offer! Oh, what an easymark!"

"Is that exactly the right term?" calmly inquired the girl.

"None better!" exulted Vandervyn. "He made you promise not to give me a share in the mine. Mining property is real estate. An agreement in regard to real estate is not binding unless in writing."

Marie's tranquil face took on an expression of artless concern. "Oh, really? Then his promise to give me the mine is not binding."

"Don't worry," reassured Vandervyn. "He will keep his word. You are sure of the mine."

"But of course, if I take back my promise, it will be no more than fair to give him the chance to take back his," she innocently remarked.

"Not at all, sweetheart," he replied. "You can do as you please. A woman's promises are not considered binding—in business matters. Legally, in most of the States, she is rated as a minor."

"Wimmen ain't minors no longer in our State," interjected Dupont.

"Thank you for reminding me, Pere," said his daughter. She looked at Vandervyn with naive seriousness. "So you see I must keep my promise."

"Oh, I say now, don't be a——" He detected something behind her look of childlike artlessness, and hastened to concede the point. "But of course if you feel that way about it! You will not have to break your promise after—— The law will then make your property mine. So that is settled, sweetheart. Now comes the main question. When shall we be married?"

The girl quivered at the word. He stepped close, and looked deep into her eyes, his own glowing golden with ardor. She dropped her gaze, and drew back from him as if confused by the suddenness of his proposal.

"I—must think," she murmured. "Would it not be best to—wait until he has given me the mine?"

"Not when you have his word that he will do it. Anyway, there's no harm in naming the day. Come, make it an early one!"

The girl's rich color deepened with a blush.

"Not now!" she replied, struggling to recover her composure. "You must wait. Perhaps tomorrow—but now I——" She glanced around as if looking for a way of escape. There was no promise of succor in her father's complacent grin. Her gaze darted down into the valley; it rested upon the encamping Indians. "Look," she murmured. "That is Thunderbolt's tepee. I am going down to see him. He should be told that he may be prosecuted if he hunts here now. It is no longer tribal land."

"There's no need, sweetheart," said Vandervyn. "I will see to it that no one interferes with the chief and his band."

"I shall go down and tell him," she insisted. "No, do not come with me."

He frowned at her willfulness, shrugged and turned to Dupont.

"Come into the cabin, Jake, and give me a drop of something," he urged. "I'm dry as a bone. That ride wasn't any joke!"

Marie was already hastening down the mountain-slope into the valley. When she came to the camp she was received with pleasant greetings. The keen eyes of the Indians had long ago perceived and recognized the white people on the terrace.

The venerable figure of Ti-owa-konza appeared in the entrance of the biggest tepee. He disappeared. A moment later

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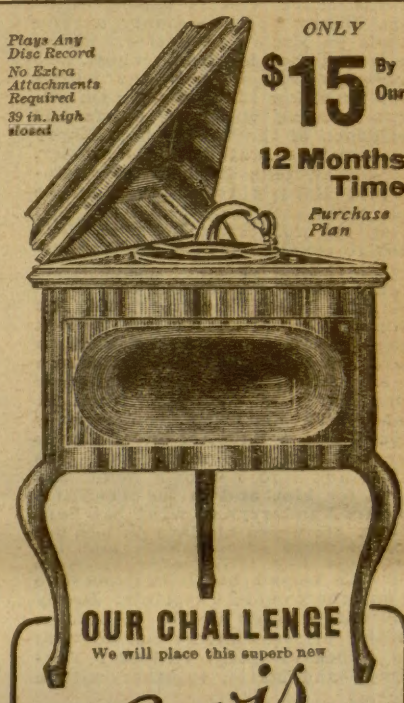

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three women came out of the tepee, and one of them told the girl that the chief wished her to go in. She stooped, and passed thru the low opening.

The chief was seated at the far side of the tepee near an outstretched blanketed form. There was no one else present. He beckoned Marie to come across to him. As she approached, she saw that the hair of the still figure before him was braided after the fashion of the maidens of the tribe. She bent over and looked into a face that was so thin and pale that at first she did not recognize it. The large sunken eyes opened, and looked up at her with a startled gaze.

"Oinna!" she exclaimed, and she knelt down beside the girl. "You are ill."

"No—— Go 'way, please," begged the wretched girl. A slow flush reddened her wan face. She sought to turn from the visitor. "I want to be alone. I am 'shamed. Go 'way, please."

Marie looked up at Ti-owa-konza. He saw the pity in her eyes, and spoke softly in Lakotah:

"Rose who art white yet red, in the flower of the golden lily a worm is gnawing. The golden lily withers. Pluck out the worm, else she will fade and go from me."

He stood up, and wrapped his blanket about him and went out.

An hour passed. Thru the canvas wall of the tent those outside heard a low murmuring and at times the sound of sobbing. At last Marie raised the edge of the tepee, and spoke to a group of women. One of them hastened to fetch from the fire a bowl of hot broth. She went into the tepee, and at once came out again without the bowl.

There followed another long wait. But no more crying could be heard, and gradually the sound of the low voices within the tepee died away to silence. Ti-owa-konza came back to the entrance, listened a while, and noiselessly slipped inside.

Oinna lay with her head on Marie's breast. Her eyes were closed. She had fallen into the peaceful healing slumber of childhood. A smile hovered on her half-parted lips. The bowl beside her was empty.

Very gently Marie laid the sleeping girl's head upon a blanket roll, and rose to come across to the silent grandfather. They talked for several minutes in Lakotah. When she stepped past him and left the tepee, his face was still set in the stoical calm of the Indian warrior of his generation, but his proud old eyes were glistening with gratitude and stern joy.

The sun had set, and the twilight was already fading. By the time Marie's slow step brought her up to the terrace the valley and mountain-slope were dusky with the shadow of approaching nightfall. Within the cabin Dupont had lit one of the mine candles. The candlestick was an empty whisky bottle. Another bottle, not yet empty, stood on the rough deal table between the two men.

"Hello, girlie!" sang out Vandervyn, as Marie paused in the open doorway. He sprang up to come around the table to her. "I've been languishing for you all afternoon. Would've chased down the hill, only your dad said you'd get on your ear if I did."

"Yes," quietly replied the girl. She had raised her hand to shield her face from the candle, as if the light dazzled her. As she spoke she stepped in and along the side of the table opposite him, apparently not seeing him. "Yes, I would not have cared to see you. I was nursing one of the girls down in the camp."

Vandervyn stopped short. "It wasn't anything infectious, I hope."

"No. I shall not suffer from the same trouble. But I am very tired. I see you and Pere have eaten. You might finish the bottle outside."

"How about a kiss to sweeten the toddy?" he suggested.

She burst into a tantalizing little laugh. "I fear you must take yours straight for a while, Reggie. You are still engaged to your cousin, I believe—— Good night, Pere."

Dupont, heavy with food and liquor, mumbled a response, and stumbled out into the dusk, reluctantly followed by Vandervyn. Marie flung their blankets out after them and barred the door.

In the morning Vandervyn was relieved to find that the night's rest had lightened her mood. She cooked a delicious little breakfast, and was pleased to be very gracious to him. The anxiety with which he had met her at the cabin door soon vanished. He fell into the gallantry of an accepted suitor who is very much in love and a bit uncertain of his conquest.

He waited until Dupont went to fetch the horses before he ventured to reopen the question of questions: "Sweetheart, you've had time to think it over and decide. Tell me, when is to be the happy day?"

"Yes," she murmured, "I have thought it over."

"You will name an early date!" he exclaimed, assured by the coy sweetness of her look.

Her emile faded, and she drooped forward in an attitude of humility that he had never before seen her pride permit. She replied in a meek voice: "Oh, no, no! I must do what is just by you. Think what it would be like for you to take back with you as your wife a quarterbreed girl straight off an Indian Reservation."

Vandervyn winced, rallied, and rejoined with ardor: "Let them think what they please, so long as you are my wife!"

"That is most gallant and—brave of you!" she murmured. "But—there is also Pere."

Vandervyn bit his lip. "Need he come along?"

Marie looked up, her eyes full of tender reproach.

"I did not think that of you, Reggie. How can I leave him here alone? You have never seemed to realize I came back from Ottawa because I wished to be with him. Even before I went to convent I saw the traits in him that you see, but also saw something more—the man that he might have been."

"Don't imagine I'm asking you to give him up," Vandervyn hastened to disclaim. "All I suggest is that we take our honeymoon trip alone."

"And leave Pere with no one to cook for ..im—leave him here! Can't you guess what would happen? Within a week—a fortnight at the utmost—he would marry the youngest and best cook within reach, a breed by preference—most likely Charlie's sister."

Vandervyn winced as if cut across the face with a whiplash.

"Not—not her!" he stammered. "That—it would be impossible! She would be—— I tell you, I will not stand for it—I cannot!"

"Of course that could not be permitted," sweetly agreed Marie. "I would not care to come back and find I had acquired a stepmother as young or younger than myself—no, not even if she were as clean and as good a girl as is Oinna Redbear."

"Then—you—think——" hesitated Vandervyn.

"Listen. I have thought and thought, and now I have it all planned out. I must do what is just by you, yet, as you see, I cannot leave Pere here. You may remember that I told you a little about the English people I knew in Ottawa. When I saw that you thought I was romancing, I said no more except in hints. I really was more intimate with Lady Verlaine than you will find it easy to believe. Her son and daughters were already married. She took a fancy to me. When I was to come home, she invited me to visit her in England. I had told her all about myself and Pere. We correspond regularly. She has renewed her invitation more than once. The last time she insisted that I should come without farther delay, and bring Pere with me."

"She did?" exclaimed Vandervyn. "Then why not all three of us go together?"

Marie drooped again in her attitude of meek humility.

"You are so generous, Reggie, to be willing to travel with Pere! But I cannot allow you to make such a sacrifice. No: there is a better way. I shall go alone with Pere to England, and then perhaps for a little visit in Paris with the sister of the Mother Superior of my convent. Pere has never forgotten his French-Canadian dialect, and I have been tinkering it into fairly good French. A month or two in Paris may correct his accent. It may also smooth down our roughnesses enough for us to venture over to Washington without putting you too greatly to shame before your friends."

"Two months!—all that time?" complained Vandervyn.

"Indeed, no. It will be much longer," answered the girl. "I cannot permit you to marry a mere Agency girl. Besides, if Pere does not wish to sell out his cattle business, I may have to wait for returns from the mine. It takes quantities of money to buy polish, and lots of time to put it on. We shall not reach Washington before November or December."

"Five or six months!"

"Yes. Aren't you willing to wait for me?" asked the girl, bridling.

The sudden change from meekness won a hasty assurance from Vandervyn: "Of course I am. It will be a fearfully long time to be without you, if you insist upon—— But I could run over and see you in England or France."

"No," she refused. "I wish you to stay and work for the good of my people. Pere and I still are members of the tribe, you know, and I am deeply interested in the irrigation project laid out by Captain Hardy."

Vandervyn smiled in his most boyish manner.

"I am neither an engineer nor an Army officer. Some one else must dig the ditches. I shall at once go on to Washington and prepare for the passage of the appropriation. It's going to slide thru as soon as Congress meets."

"And then I shall come over from Paris. You will break off your engagement with your cousin, and we—— No, no, sir! not a single kiss—not one until you are free, and I set the day. I am an heiress now, and must act accordingly. Besides, here is Pere with the horses. We must be starting."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

TILTING AT WINDMILLS.

THE early winter rains that followed an ideal Indian summer at the national capital were chill and sleety. But Congress was now in session, and Washington was bright and gay with the activities of officialdom and official society.

One of the first events of the season had been a ball in honor of the superb French beauty and heiress, Miss Dupont. She had arrived with a matronly French lady well known in Parisian society; a tall, olive-tinted maid, who was said to be of Spanish or Hindu origin; and a male relative, Monsieur Jacques Dupont, who spoke French with French-Canadian idioms and English with a quaint sprinkling of Western Americanisms. By those who saw him before they had the pleasure and privilege of meeting Miss Dupont, he was said to be quite "impossible." But after meeting her, they usually agreed with the general verdict that he was decidedly amusing and "picturesque."

Letters to the wives of three or four ambassadors opened to the heiress the doors of the most exclusive official society, and her wonderful beauty and charm carried all before her by storm. Men raved over her eyes; women over her French gowns. She soon had a suite of devoted admirers and suitors, among whom, despite his engagement to the daughter of his eminent uncle, Mr. Reginald Vandervyn was one of the most ardent.

All this had come to Hardy thru society reports in the newspapers and from the chance remarks of acquaintances. The remarks very seldom were made by persons fortunate enough to have attended functions graced by the presence of Miss Dupont. Hardy's neatly kept clothes were somewhat out of style, and his lodgings, in an old warren down on M street, were cheap and shabby.

There were still better reasons for the worldly-wise to shun the company of the officer so lately distinguished for his services in the Philippines. It was whispered that the interests for which he had been diligently lobbying since midsummer were opposed to the interests of the pro-administration group of which the eminent Senator Clemmer was the leader. More openly the fact was bruited about that he was to be subjected to trial by court-martial on grave charges.

For he was still in the service.

Upon his return from the hard-won race for the mine, he had filed his claim with the commissioners, and journeyed on as soon as possible to the railroad. There he had sold his mare at a low price, but with the option of buying her back within a year. He had then started East, too intent upon his purpose to delay even for a telegram from Vancouver Barracks, and never doubting that his commanding officer had granted him the customary leave of absence pending the acceptance of his unconditional and immediate resignation.

Great had been his consternation when, the day of his arrival in Washington, he had reported himself at the War Department. Not only had leave of absence been denied him and all action on his resignation been suspended; he had been posted for desertion. However, his record on the one hand, and the indecent haste of the attack on the other, had brought about sufficient intervention by members of the General Staff to cause several months' delay in the plan of his enemies to crush him. Action on the charges filed against him by the Indian commissioners and by his commanding officer had been postponed from month to month.

Meantime he had been placed under the nominal arrest of confinement to the limits of the District of Columbia, which left him free to pursue the ends for which he had come East. To his surprise, no contest had been filed against his mineral claim. On the contrary, he had soon found himself legally entitled to assign the mine to Marie. His carefully drawn and duly witnessed conveyance had started West in the next mail. Marie's note of acknowledgment stated the esteem and gratitude of the writer in the most correct and conventional of terms.

His progress towards the accomplishment of his second purpose had been far less smooth. In fact, after months of persistent endeavor, he could not be sure that he had made any progress wh—

(Continued on Page 12.)

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Second Installment of

The Thirteenth Opal

By Irving Estes

Read This First

STANLEY FELLOWS, an American in the employ of a Mexican jewelry concern, after displaying a packet of twelve opals to a stranger, finds, when his customer departs, that there are thirteen jewels in the packet instead of the original twelve. He puts the thirteenth opal into his pocket, intending to take it to his employer, but the opportunity does not present itself until the end of the day. However, just previous to this, Nunez, a Mexican, and his unknown enemy, reports him to his employer and he is discharged as a thief. On going for a walk, he encounters the stranger who is the cause of his dismissal. The stranger asks him to come to his house, offers him as much salary per week as Fellows has been getting a month, and when Fellows comes to his house explains what he wants him to do. Because he is looking for a man who has robbed his father, Fellows does not accept the man's proposition immediately, but promises to give his answer within two days.

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CHAPTER VI.

A CHILD OF SORROW.

LATE that afternoon, still undecided what course to pursue, Stanley Fellows directed his footsteps once more in the direction of the Alameda.

He found the streets adjacent to the park lined with the booths of Indians from all the country surrounding the city; vendors who had come in to sell pretty little figures, gaudily-colored pottery and curiously-contrived toys to the tourists. With no intent to buy, he nevertheless began sauntering down the line, taking far more note of the motley horde than of the wares displayed.

At a cursory glance all the booths seemed to display identically the same assortment; but a more careful survey showed that each possessed some feature peculiarly its own. Especially was this true in the style and coloring of the pottery, by which means the initiated could readily determine from what particular portion of the country the owners of each booth hailed; and one bent upon seeing the display in its entirety must needs pass along the whole length of the busy, litigious line.

This Fellows accomplished, mildly interested in the pottery, until at length he stood before the last booth, jostled and crowded by the throng pressing in around him on all sides. An Indian woman in the booth, catching his eye, held up a guadily-colored vase before him. With many gestures and insistent tones, she exclaimed: "Thirty centavos, senor! Ver' boo-ti-ful!"

"I Believe That I Can Help You to Locate These Venders."

Fellows shook his head in response to her earnest appeal and turned to leave. With imploring tones she still entreated him to purchase the vase: "Senor! Extra fine! Three centavos, senor; only three centavos!"

The American paused, then suddenly turned and re-entered the booth. It was not the somewhat startling drop from thirty cents to three in the price of pottery which caught his attention; but a face peering out stealthily from the semi-darkness in the rear of the booth.

What a picture it formed there! A countenance beautiful, almost divine in contour, yet every line now portraying abject fear and terror. Fellows edged in closer. He could discern now in the shadowy background the frail figure of a young boy, whose gaze was fastened upon the Indian woman, the latter as yet quite unaware of his presence.

Fellows watched the face in silent wonderment and admiration; he had never beheld a more exquisitely molded countenance outside of pictures by the old masters. The dark, soulful eyes glowed with suppressed emotion; the rich, delicately-tinted complexion contrasted with thick, clustering locks, black as night, tossed back from his well-formed forehead. Fellows was fascinated by the beauty and intensity of the face; yet its utter sadness and the air of hopelessness of the slight, pitiful figure standing there in affright and consternation filled him with compassion, and a strange yearning pressed his heart. At that moment the Indian woman turned and beheld the trembling lad.

She stalked slowly toward him. Seeing from his manner that something out of the ordinary had befallen him, she spoke a few curt words of inquiry. At his frightened response she suddenly burst into furious rage; in high, shrill screeches she began hurling a storm of abuse and invective against the cowering child.

With his knowledge of Spanish, Fellows was able to gather from such portions of the tirade he caught that the boy had been sent out with a basket of toys and pottery to sell; that he had disposed of all, but while returning to the booth and while passing along an unfrequented street, had been set upon by a gang of young thugs, thrown down and the money from the sale of the wares taken from him.

As she talked, the Indian woman became more and more infuriated, until she worked herself into a frenzy, screaming shrilly and shaking her clinched fists in the pale face of the shrinking, terrified boy. Many in the crowd outside stopped thru idle curiosity to witness the scene; the occupants of the booths, the venders, were too accustomed, apparently, to give any heed to the incident. Suddenly the woman stooped and picked up a piece of rope, with which she struck the boy a stinging blow across the face. He cowered lower in the corner, but no sound escaped him, either of pain or entreaty. Seeing that she seemed determined to continue the brutal attack, Fellows decided that he could continue a passive onlooker no longer; still, he hardly knew how best to interfere without doing more harm than good. He determined upon an artifice, which, for the time at least, would relieve the suffering and torment of the child.

"Here, senora!" he exclaimed quickly, "I want that large vase on the upper row. Be quick; I have but little time."

At this prospect of an advantageous sale, the woman's manner underwent a wondrous change. A smile, intended to be ingratiating, but which served only to intensify the cruel, crafty lines, overspread her swarthy countenance.

"Ah, senor, thees vase? Ees it not boo-ti-ful! You see the glaze it has? Only we of the Guadalajara country make dat kind! Only two dollar, senor!"

Fellows handed her the money and received the vase, which he set to one side on the counter. Tho he had told her of his hurry, he wanted now to talk with her regarding the boy; still, he feared that with the transaction concluded, her knowledge of his own language would suffer a sudden relapse. Somewhat to his surprise, she seemed now in a loquacious mood and willing to answer more than the inevitable "Quien sabe!" (Who knows?); seeing his apparent interest in the pitiful figure at the back of the booth, she exclaimed dolefully:

"Ah, senor, that boy—the trouble he gif me!"

"Yes?"

"Yes, senor." She lifted her eyes imploringly to heaven. "An' the expense he costs us: he eat so much!"

"I'm sure he must," observed Fellows, consolingly. "He is not even your own child, I take it?"

She glanced at him sharply, but the American's face portrayed none of the emotion which filled his heart. With no further trace of suspicion, she continued readily: "My child? No, senor! We found him."

"Found him?"

"You Brute! You Cowardly Greaser, to Strike a Child Like That!"

"Yes, senor."

"Where?"

"In the big desert we cross two years ago."

"Lost from his parents?"

"Mebbe so, senor. We find him all alone nearby water-hole. We stop for water; him crawl up, mos' dead from the thirst. We begin to drink; he crawl up, an' he begin cry, 'Yo tambien' (I also), 'yo tambien'—all time he cry 'yo tambien!' Den we all laugh—for when he try get water he fall over, he so weak an' seek. It was fun to see him, senor—an' see him fall like dat; an' all time he say, 'Yo tambien —agua!' (water)."

"And you gave him drink?"

"Naturally, senor, after we done laughin' at him. Den we take him with us, an' we name him—what you think, senor? We name him 'Yo Tambien!'"

She stopped to wait upon a prospective customer; Fellows stood by, meditating upon the strange recital. He felt that the woman's story was probably true. The fact of their taking the boy, however, he knew was prompted solely by a hope of obtaining either ransom or reward; for they were shrewd enough to know the boy belonged to the better class. Possibly, failure to get in touch with the boy's relatives had embittered them. Disappointed in not getting the expected money, they were taking their vengeance upon the frail, unfortunate child himself.

Fellows' eyes sought again the back of the booth. "Poor little Yo Tambien!" he reflected to himself. "Would it not have been better for you had the water for which you cried in the desert never reached your parched little lips?"

CHAPTER VII.

A MEXICAN'S HATRED

SINCE the interruption of the torture brought upon him by the loss of the money, the boy had continued to gaze at Fellows with grateful, wondering eyes; only when the Indian woman looked in his direction, or spoke his name, did he cower now. The sale finished, the woman returned to where Fellows stood in silent reflection, and resumed her story:

"An' so we take him with us to the Guadalajara country, an' never know where he come from. Perhaps, he stolen for money—or revenge, an' left near water-hole, who knows? But he ees so bad, senor; an' he eat so much!"

She was interrupted by a noise at the back of the booth. A half-drunken Mexican came shambling in, his breath reeking with the fumes of pulque. Fellows gave a sudden start. He had seen the man a number of times in the store, talking with Antonio Nunez. He had heard, in fact, that the two were cousins. Each had the same beady, crafty facial expression, the same acid leer of the thin, cruel lips. True, Nunez, because of environment, possessed a certain thin veneer of respectability and gentility; but the American felt that they both came of the same low, vulgar breed of rascals.

The woman paused abruptly, and drawing the muttering Mexican to one side, quickly imparted to him the details of their loss. The man's anger and sudden fury was even more terrible than her own had been. Going up to the terror-stricken boy he struck him a savage blow with his fist, knocking him senseless to the dirt floor of the booth.

The cowardly, brutal blow sent the blood tingling in the American's veins; with a voice choked with anger and indignation he exclaimed fiercely, "You brute! You cowardly greaser—to strike a child like that!"

He jumped over the low counter into the booth. With a snarl of rage like a beast at bay the Mexican turned upon him. A glare of recognition flashed into his bleary eyes; he had seen Fellows in the Sanchez store and remembered him.

"Ah, the Americano jeweler, hey! What you want here? No opals here for the dirty Americano to steal!"

Evidently Nunez had already told him of what had occurred at the store. For an instant Fellows was too astounded to speak. The Mexican wrongly inter-

preted this hesitation. He went on sneeringly: "What you want, trouble? You get him mighty quick!" He advanced slowly toward Fellows, continuing his braggadocio and bluff. "I brave man; I no fear gringo bums; I fight the bull——"

"Wrong, all wrong, old leather-face," Fellows broke in, coolly. "You throw the bull—you fight little children!"

There was a snicker amongst the crowd outside at this; it was evident that his fellow-venders had little use for the drunken sot, and would give him neither moral nor physical support in the present altercation. The titter of amusement made the Mexican furious; he lost all control of himself, all caution. He leaped forward, but paused abruptly as he beheld the cool defiance in the face before him. Then, his anger getting the best of him again, he continued to close in, a long, glittering stiletto in his raised hand. Even then he hesitated to attack the American, tho the latter was unarmed.

"Why not I keel you, hey!" he hissed forth, "why not I keel you right now!"

He shook the stiletto in Fellows' face. The American reached up quickly and clutched the other's wrist in a vise-like grip. The woman circled about them like an angry hawk, but did not swoop in.

"Now, you lop-eared son of a greaser bandit, you drop that knife! Drop it!" Fellows' voice held the insistent assurance and menace which command obedience.

The blade fell to the floor. The face of the Mexican assumed a sickly yellow hue; he was trembling in every limb. "Let go, senor," he whined, "I no hurt you!"

Fellows flung him from him. "No, I rather think you won't! You wouldn't hurt any one—but a little helpless child!" Fellows stepped back, and took his position again on the opposite side of the counter. Seeing that he was now in no immediate danger of attack the Mexican once more became threatening.

"Mebbe some time I see you 'gain!" he snarled, "mebbe some time. Den, when good chance come—ze-ep! ze-eep!" and he drew his swarthy fingers across his throat significantly.

"Any old time, my Aztec!" Fellows responded cheerily. "'Mebbe' some time I see you, too. I hope so; and believe me, you yellow four-flusher, I'll be right there with a little of that 'ze-ep' stuff myself!"

Realizing that a continuation of the quarrel could result in no possible good, Fellows turned abruptly, and began making his way thru the throng, followed by the bitterest threats and sneers of the once more valiant and defiant vender.

He went at once to his room in a little casa on Puente de Alvarado.

Thruout the long evening his thoughts reverted to the sweet, sad face of Yo Tambien. He pitied the delicate, sensitive child left helpless there in the hands of the ruffian, who was sure to wreak his spite and revenge upon him all the more because of Fellows' interruption. Yes, he was certain now that his interference, well meant in itself, could only react by making matters worse, if possible, for the boy he had sought to protect. This so distressed him that he forgot entirely his own immediate sorrows and troubles; what could he do to relieve a condition which he felt was far more unendurable than even his own tangled, unsatisfactory affairs!

With the dawn of the following day came a determination to return to the Alameda, to seek out the particular vender whose wrath and animosity had been aroused, attempt a reconciliation if possible, then make a proposition to take Yo Tambien off their hands. The only drawback he could see to such a plan was his lack of funds; and he knew the Mexican could be moved only by money. Anyhow, he decided to make some sort of attempt. If all other means failed, he decided to seek the assistance of the law to prevent further brutality toward the unfortunate orphan.

He arose early and set forth, already feeling better in mind now that he was about to attempt something to aid Yo Tambien. He hurried on across the park which lay stretched forth tranquilly beautiful beneath the rays of the morning sun. He came to the long rows of booths. No business was being transacted. The venders, for the most part, were busy preparing or partaking of breakfast. His heart began to thump as he neared the end of the line. How had it fared with little Yo Tambien during his absence? Would the Mexican still be too wrathy and surly to listen to any peace offering, or a proposition whereby Fellows could take the boy away from him, to bother them no more?

He reached the last booth; a sudden weight fell upon his heart. It was empty and deserted. The venders had packed up their wares, departing for regions unknown.

Fellows attempted to gain some information from those in the other booths. Evidently suspicious of his motives, he was answered only in surly tones, in monosyllables, in silent shrugs, or with a grunted "Who knows?" Information was not to be had, at least along the lines he sought. The boy, and his cruel masters, were gone: that was all he could learn.

He turned away and walked slowly across the park, which no longer seemed so smilingly beautiful and serene. He had succeeded only in muddling matters; he was depressed, but still determined to carry this new quest to a finish with his other search.

Poor little Yo Tambien! Fellows had sought to aid and had failed. Tho depressed, he had no thought of considering this a defeat and giving up his purpose. No, he was in the fight to a finish now, ready to face any danger, intrigue or cunning scheming the future might hold in store while searching for the boy who had so suddenly come into his life, only to disappear as suddenly.

He was certain the abrupt departure of the Indian venders was the immediate result of the quarrel over the boy. If this were so, then they had a well-defined plan regarding him, some evil objective to be attained. Despite the woman's complaining, they looked upon the little outcast as a valuable asset. Evidently, rather than run the risk of further interference on the part of the American, they had suddenly concluded to vanish from the scene.

The realization came to Fellows that from now on it was to be a battle of wits, nerve and possibly brawn. He welcomed the task, the work ahead cut out for him; and this even tho he seemed to feel that a subtle, malignant spell was weaving an entangling web; the enveloping, virulent spell of—the thirteenth opal.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHANCE DETERMINES FELLOWS' COURSE.

AT THE appointed time, Stanley Fellows was on hand to deliver his answer to Senor Limantour regarding the management of the Sangremal mine in Queretaro. The owner received him with affable courtesy, as upon his former call.

Before getting into the business at hand, Limantour observed: "Has it appeared strange to you, Senor Fellows, that a man in my position, the owner of Mexico's largest opal mine, was apparently so little known, and attracted so little attention, say, in a large concern like that with which you were employed? That you yourself, during your long connection with the firm, had not met me, and did not even know my name and business interests?"

"That seemed to me rather peculiar," the American admitted, candidly.

"Yet that is easily explained. The demand for the Sangremal opals exceeds the supply. Were I intimately known in all the big jewelry concerns, I would be needlessly worried by constant importuning. I have my sales agents here in the city. They attend to the selling, unhampered and unrestricted. I keep in the background; that is as it should be. My acquaintance among the jewelry firms is limited; and that is quite satisfactory. And yet, while you were showing the opals the other day, I was being observed by some one who knew my identity."

"Some one connected with the firm?"

"Yes, senor."

"Who?"

"A salesman named Antonio Nunez."

"Nunez knew you to be the owner of the Sangremal?"

"Evidently, yes; why he did not give this information to his employer, when accusing you, I am not able to understand." Limantour's lips parted in an inscrutable smile. "This fellow Nunez," he resumed, "is hardly what might be termed a good friend of yours, is he?"

"No."

"I thought not, and from other reasons besides the fact that he reported you to Sanchez——"

"May I ask how you know it was Nunez who did that?"

"Certainly, senor; he told me himself."

"When?"

(Continued on Page 23.)

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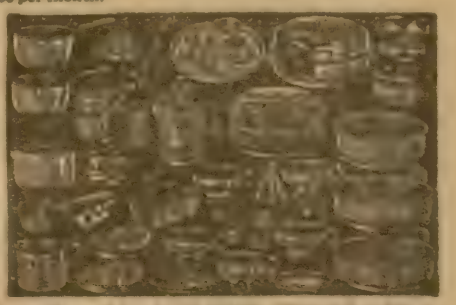

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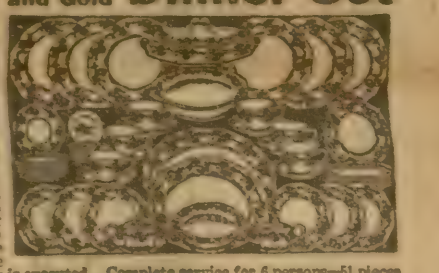

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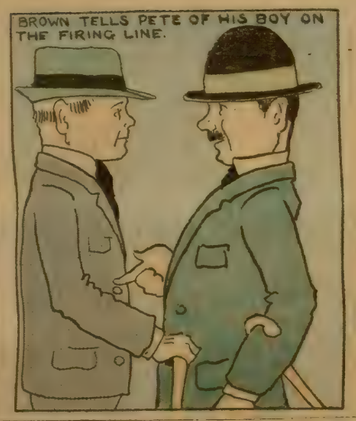

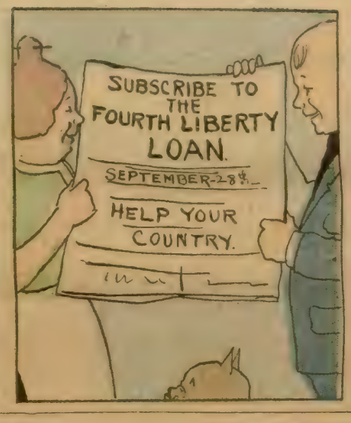

And One by One They Went.

On leaving the harbor the ship ran into a nasty, half-pitching, choppy sea, which was especially noticeable as the twenty-five passengers at the captain's table sat down to dinner.

"I hope that all twenty-five of you will have a pleasant trip," said the captain, as the soup appeared, "and that this little assembly of—of twenty-four will be much benefited by the voyage. I look upon these twenty-two smiling faces as a father upon his family, for I am responsible for the safety of this group of—of seventeen. I hope that all fourteen of you will join me in drinking to a merry trip. I believe that we eight are most congenial, and I applaud the judgment which chose these three persons for my table. You and I, my dear sir, are—— There, steward, clear away, and bring me the fish!"

Plenty of Time.

Here's one from Kearny.

Three prisoners with their orderlies were seated in the barber shop waiting for some upholstering to be done. In came Captain Reeves in a hurry for a shave.

"Are you men in any particular hurry?" asked the captain.

"No, sir," chirps one bird. "I've got thirty days."

Couldn't Take Hint.

"See here, Estelle, that second lieutenant stayed here entirely too late last evening."

"Well, maw—I—I——"

"Why don't you throw a hint at him?"

"What's the use, maw, the carrier boy threw the morning paper at him and he didn't even pay any attention to that."

Cutting Bills in Half.

The late J. P. Mitchel of New York was talking at a dinner about war prices.

"These war prices are staggering," he said. "They're very hard to combat, too. When a man comes along with a simple, easy method for bringing war prices down to the prewar levels, his idea is apt to be about as valuable as Josh's.

"Josh said at the club one day:

"The high cost of living is fierce, but I can tell you how to cut your bills in half.'

"'How? How?' the big clubroom chorused.

"'Use an ordinary pair of scissors,' said Josh."

Safety First.

In a village lived a doctor noted for his reckless motor driving. One day when he answered the telephone a woman's voice asked him if he were going out driving that afternoon.

"No; I hardly think I will have time this afternoon. But why do you ask?"

"Well," replied the anonymous questioner, "I want to send my little daughter down the street for some bread if you are not."

Good Division of Spoils.

"I thought you said when we began this case in court," said the lawyer, "that it wasn't the money you were after, but the principle of the thing."

"I did say that, but what of it?"

"Do you still feel that way about it?"

"Of course I do."

"Well, in that event, since we have just won a splendid vicory, I'll keep the money the jury awarded you, and you may have the verdict."

Business Manager—"You'll have to work or fight, Rastus."
"Dey can't touch me, sah. I'se de manager ob a fambly laundry."
"What's the name of the laundry?"
"Martha."

Short Course.

"He was going to teach her to skate in five lessons."

"Well?"

"But she took a tumble in the middle of the first lesson and graduated suddenly."

"Can't you give an old soldier something, mum?"

"Have you ever been in action?"

"Yes'm, the hottest action in the campaign."

"Were you hurt or wounded?"

"No, mum, but I was on the list of the missing."

"Poor fellow!"

Knew Him Too Well.

Wife—"Hello! Dr. Bunyun? Yes? Come right away. Mr. Little has another one of his spells."

Doctor (half an hour later)—"Why didn't you send for me sooner? You should not have waited until your husband was unconscious."

Wife—"Well, as long as he had his senses he wouldn't let me send for you."

An Appeal to the Eye.

"What do you think of that girl who wears furs around her neck every time she dresses up?" asked Mrs. Corntossel.

"Let 'er alone," exclaimed the farmer. "We can point to her as proof of our statement that this is one of the coolest climates on earth."

Only Thing He Wouldn't Take.

Subbubs—"I heard that your last servant was a regular thief."

Hubbubs—"Well, I wouldn't use so harsh a word, but I will say that the only thing we could leave around him with any safety was a bath."

A Flight of Imagination.

Scout—"I was out motoring the other day and I came to a river, but could find no means of getting my machine across."

Scoutmaster—"Well, what did you do?"

Scout—"Oh, I just sat down and thought it over."

Business Inquiry.

"Doesn't your neighbor find chicken feed very high in raising poultry?"

"I dare say he does, for he inquired very particularly if I was going to plant a war garden."

The Future.

"What was that man's occupation who came asking you for a job awhile ago?"

"He said he used to be a railroad president."

Prudence vs. Bravery.

Lucinda was testing the devotion of Erastus.

"S'pose it is night and we are in a deep black woods. There comes a bo'er constricter a-wriggling thru the grass; an' a wildcat a-boundin' thru the bushes; an' a lion roarin' an' makin' for us a mile a minute. What are we a-gonna do?"

"There ain't gonna be no we."

The Doctor.

"He's highly nervous. I advised him not to think about his condition."

"That's fine advice. As if a man can help thinking about his condition. Did you charge him for that advice?"

"No, I gave him that free."

Handicaped.

"The dachshund is a funny-looking animal."

"Long body and short legs."

"Yes, there must be a lot of places that he can't scratch."

Ambiguous.

Frost—"I don't like women to wear colors."

Mrs. Frost—"All right, love. I'll gladly wear black for you."

Literally.

"Well, my lad," said the facetious man to the elevator boy, "I see in your position you have a chance to rise."

"Yes, sir," a mighty good thing you-all is goin' in, growled the boy, de cavalry. De horge'll know which way "but I get called to turn when you don't!" down every time I do it."

Chastisement.

"The cream must be whipped thoroly."

"Well, things are going wrong. My wife is just about mad enough to make a good job of it."

Horse-sense.

A negro officer in a training camp was having a desperate time getting his men to turn and march in the right direction.

"Right face!—left face!" he would call, and they would do just the opposite.

Finally he called out in anguish: "Halt!"

THE WHOLE FAMILY.

Little Miss Muffet
She sat on a tuffet,
Hoping her sweetheart would stay.
But along came her mother,
Her father and brother,
And frightened her suitog away.

Fifty-Fifty.

Poet—"I see you have accepted one of my poems and refused the other."

Editor—"Yes, I took one of them out of sympathy for you and refused the other out of sympathy for our readers."

Ring the Alarm for Patrol Wagon.

"There is one thing I'll never suggest give a rising vote of thanks to."

"What is that?"

"The alarm clock."

Good Job.

The Caller—"Smith and Banks have employed me to collect the bill you owe them."

The Impecunious One—"You are to be congratulated, sir, in obtaining a permanent position."

Police Commissioner—"If you were ordered to disperse a mob, what would you do?"

Applicant—"Pass around the hat, sir."

Police Commissioner—"That'll do; you're engaged."

Fussed Him Dreadfully.

"Well, have you always been a tramp?" asked the strong-faced woman at the back door.

"No, no, ma'am," was the seedy one's reply. "I used to be a drug clerk up in Maine."

"And why did you give up that occupation, pray?"

"Well, you see, ma'am, since woman's rights have been established I couldn't stand the ladies coming up to the soda fountain and winking at me."

A Child's Hunch.

"So you prefer winter to summer, Mr Featherbrain?"

"Not especially, Dorothy. Why do you ask, my child?"

"Well, sister said yesterday it would be a cold day when you took a girl automobile riding."

Prerequisite.

Mrs. Meekton—"Daughter says she won't marry any man who hasn't been in the war."

Mr. Meekton—"That's sporting of her, and I judge he'll need the previous experience."—Judge.

A Mistake.

She—"I thought you told me this was a civil court."

He—"So it is."

She—"Why, I've been listening to all those lawyers and they are just as rude as they can be."

Too Much So.

"My daughter's fiance is a very promising young man."

"I know he is. He has been promising to pay me the money he owes me when he gets hold of yours."

The Woman and the Dog.

An elderly woman, with a small dog upon her lap, while riding in a trolley car, asked the conductor if he would kindly tell her when they got to Hazel street.

After she had got up two or three times the conductor told her to keep her seat and he would let her know when they reached Hazel street.

Finally he called out, "Hazel street!"

The woman held the dog up to the window and said: "Fido, look! There's where you were born!" Then, turning to the conductor, she remarked: "I'm going to the end of the line."

Sticking to Facts.

An agent approaching a house met a little boy at the gate and asked: "Is your mother home?"

"Yes, sir," said the boy politely.

The agent walked across the long lawn and, after ringing, returned to the youth, saying:

"I thought you said your mother was at home."

"Yes, sir, she is," replied the boy.

"But I have rapped several times without receiving an answer."

"That may be, sir," said the boy. "I don't live there."

Complimentary.

Mr. Flatbush—"No, I don't want the girls to study all those fancy things."

Mrs. Flatbush—"But, dear, you don't want them to grow up in ignorance and know absolutely nothing."

"Well, you've got along all right, haven't you?"

Didn't Prolong It.

"I see another lady was acquitted of murder. One good feature about the case, tho."

"What's that?" asked Snort Tunket.

"The trial only lasted thirty minutes."

Clever Ruse.

He had been married about a year, and had taken to spending his evenings downtown with the boys. One night his conscience worried him, and he thought he would phone his wife and get her to come down and meet him and have dinner with him. So he called her up.

"Hello, kid!" he began. "Say, slip on some old clothes and run down and meet me on the quiet. We'll have a good dinner, and then we'll get a machine and go out and smear a little red paint around. How about it?"

"I'll be delighted to join you, Jack," was the reply. "But why not come up to the house and get me? There's no load now."

As the young husband's name is Tom he spends his evenings at home now.

And his wife wears a queer smile when he isn't looking at her.

Lost Its Usefulness.

The young housewife, looking very pretty and womanlike in a big green overall, was cleaning out the pantry cupboard.

"Dickie," she called to her young husband, who was smoking in the splck and span little drawing-room, "I want you to bring me a mousetrap home tomorrow."

"But, angel," cried the young man, "I brought you one home only yesterday."

"I know, pet," called back the young bride, "but that one has a mouse in it."

Turn About.

Mamma—"Now, Freddy, mind what I say. I don't want you to go over into the next garden to play with that Binks boy. He's very rude."

Freddy (heard a few moments afterward calling over the wall)—"Say, Binks, ma says I'm not to go into your garden because you're rude; but you come over here into my garden—I ain't rude."

"My husband does such original things!"
"For instance?"
"Well, yesterday he gave me some money without my having to ask for it."

Transposition.

107—Fill out the blanks with the same five letters differently arranged.

—— long time ago I was on the ——, but not in a ——, and —— of water formed like a great waterspout.

Beheadings and Curtailings.

108—Behead five letters and curtail five letters from:

1. Absolutely necessary, and leave a writing instrument.
2. Places where goods are manufactured, and leave a deed.
3. Relatively, and leave a rodent.
4. A beautiful autumn flower, and leave an insect.
5. Placing in a lower rank, and leave a confused uproar.
6. Natives of Scandinavia, and leave a woman's name.
7. A killing by treacherous violence, and leave iniquity.
8. A sea south of Europe, and leave to go wrong.
9. The act of consolidating, and leave a cover.
10. Something offered and burnt upon an altar as a sacrifice and leave not on.
11. Relating to an ambassador, and leave dejected.
12. Modest, and leave a number.

When the foregoing words have been rightly beheaded and curtailed the initials of the words remaining will spell the name of the chief epic in the English language.

Jumbled Sports.

109—1. Mmgswntl. 2. Loptgnileavu. 3. Salbblea. 4. Labtolof. 5. Ginnoeac. 6. Girdhunl. 7. Folg. 8. Llaabbktes. 9. Taginks 10. Kchoye.

Word Building.

110—I am a half century.
Prefix a letter and I am a boy's nickname.
Prefix another and I am a boy's best friend.
Prefix another, I am a beautiful jewel.
Prefix another and I make varnish.

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S PUZZLES.

103. Diamond.

```
      P
     SET
    DANES
   DIGESTS
  SAGITTATE
PENETRATION
  TESTAMURS
   STATUES
    STIRS
     EOS
      N
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104. Anagram.

Tennis

105. Flower Puzzle.

Dutchman's breeches, Pansy, Anemone, Violet, Indian pipe, Jack-in-the-pulpit, Lady Slipper, Sweet William, Rose, Four-o'clock.

106. Charades.

1. Highland. 2. Windmill. 3. Currant. 4. Earache. 5. Rattan. 6. Decay (D K).

It is not desired that readers send in the answers to the puzzles. They are printed simply as brain teasers, and the correct answers will be printed the following week.

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GENTLE JABS.

You can always have the law at actual costs.

Next to charity is the appreciation thereof.

Being busy is one of the synonyms of being happy.

The dull man bores you and the sharp one skins you.

Nature doesn't use self-made beauties for her patterns.

A man seldom shoots above the mark at which he aims.

It is easier to marry a genius than it is to support him.

A successful story is a novel that ends without a wedding.

Charity covers a multitude of sins—and so does success.

About the only force some people have is the force of habit.

The things a man is going to do put no money in his pocket.

You never know a man until you have traded horses with him.

Life would be monotonous if we didn't make an occasional enemy.

A good resolution is all right—provided you don't let it go at that.

Don't be a chronic kicker; if you must kick, make it swift and sure.

A night latch is like a tombstone when it is put up for a late husband.

Knife wounds heal more quickly than those caused by a sharp tongue.

Occasionally there is a man wise enough to think poetry without writing it.

No girl can write an effective love letter and chew gum at the same time.

When a fox occupies the judge's bench the goose on trial has no earthly show.

Some men are not satisfied with courting trouble—they go ahead and marry it.

Usually it's the want of opportunity that enables a man to boast of his honesty.

A man isn't necessarily a fool because he has the faculty of making others think he is.

Even a strong-minded female dislikes the idea of standing up for herself in a street car.

The woman who doesn't care what she does usually marries a man who doesn't care what he does.

If you think the rents are too high in your neighborhood hire an amateur cornet player to move in.

The Editor Has His Say Here

THE Ledger is an essential toward winning the war. The United States Government so declared in the recent new list of industries which it is deemed must play a part in licking the Kaiser. Perhaps you wonder how a fiction magazine could help. The answer is easy. The thing that may make or break a nation in wartime is the spirit of its people at home as well as the spirit of its armies. In military terms it is called morale. A nation whose morale is shaken, which finds time to brood over the fact that a great war is going on, is in danger of having the same spirit infect its troops and carry them into battle half whipped before they start. How, then, is the spirit of the people at home to be kept up to a cheerful pitch? By interfering as little as possible with their normal life. And the Ledger helps by giving them the fiction to which they have been accustomed.

AMERICANS are known as a nation of readers. In times of peace almost any kind of a publication can get a nice circulation in a short time, and if it hits the bull's-eye of what the people want it is assured a successful life. Perhaps in no other nation do more people read and enjoy fiction. When the United States entered the struggle in Europe a great many people became so wrought up over it that they immediately discarded the habits of a lifetime, they read nothing except the war news and they became quite melancholy and pessimistic because we were at war. But speedily they discovered that this would not do, that they must permit their minds to dwell upon other things, and gradually they resumed their habits of reading. Every publisher in the country felt the effects of that spirit in the fact that his subscription lists dropped, then rose again. Today those magazines and papers which are able to weather the storm of higher costs of everything connected with the publishing business find that people still are reading, that fiction again is in demand and that people are just as critical of what they read as they were before the war. Reading of other things than the war is one way of keeping up the morale of the nation.

THE proof of what people want to read may be found in the number of magazines which are still doing business at the old stand. The Ledger is one of them. Most publishers have been called upon to raise their rates to meet the new postage increase. The Ledger is not one of them. Neither has the Ledger found it necessary to resort to flamboyant advertising to hold its own. The editor for a long time has been a reader of a certain magazine which has found a welcome in a great many American homes. In the past the magazine never has found it necessary to flood its readers with appeals for renewals. Usually a simple notice that your subscription had expired was sufficient. Yet this year it is sending out a gaudily colored circular and in big red letters is the word "Free." Then the circular goes on to say that it has nothing free to offer, that the word was put there in red because an advertising expert had declared "Free" is one word which attracts more attention than any other in the English language, and that the magazine felt it necessary to attract the attention of those readers whose subscriptions were about to expire. The Ledger has nothing to offer free, either, but you get real value for the nickel a week which you spend for it.

DO YOU read your home town paper? And don't you find there quite often things and names that amuse you greatly? And don't you tell others who may have overlooked it of your discovery and let them enjoy it with you? Well, we want you to let all of the readers of the Ledger in on these funny things. Next week on this page you will find some of the things which readers have sent us in the past and which we never have published. From now on the bars are down and we expect you, as well as us, to get many a good laugh out of this column during the fall and winter. The Ledger or The Saturday Blade is not immune, either, and if you find some statement or some heading that you deem worthy of a laugh send it in. As an example of what we want the editor recalls the old joke of the marriage license issued to Henry Corn and Mary Bean and the remark which always went with it that the children would be succotash. Another example is where an editor lets his paper come out with an advertisement stating that some one has a dog for sale, "will eat anything. Very fond of children." There are lots of these things in every paper every year. In order to get his item in the Ledger the reader who sends it in must mention the paper in which it appeared. The funny names squibs need give only the town. Watch this column closely and perhaps you will see something on some one in your own town.

NOW, getting down to the fiction which we have for you, the editor wishes to mention that he has quite a number of cleverly written Western stories which will appear during the next few weeks. They are not all from the pen of the same author, so that if you do not like the writing of some man or woman you may find in the story of another the very kind of a tale which you do like. We have bought for use between now and the first of next year a large number of exceptional stories and we won't be in the market for anything except serials for some time. We believe we have a splendid variety of tales for you and that you will enjoy them as much as we did in reading them over.

THIS coming week we are going to run the first half of a rather unusual two-part story in the Ledger. It is called "An Adventure in Motherhood," and was written by John Beckner Boude, whose stories have appeared from time to time in our pages. Unlike most of our stories, "An Adventure in Motherhood" has no love angle. It is purely a story of maternal instinct. The girl, with a baby she claims as her own, arrives in Squaw Rock, a mountain settlement. Since she cannot tell who is the baby's father, the women brand her with the Scarlet Letter. However, one kind miner takes her to his home, where his wife takes care of her and the child. Then, some time later, they find work for her to do in a nearby boarding-house. There, under unusual circumstances, the baby's parentage is uncovered, and—— If you would read a story that is different, and yet has a universal appeal, watch the next week's Ledger. You will find that "An Adventure in Motherhood" is well worth the time you spend reading it.

The Editor.

Willing to Assist Father.

THE old gentleman tucked his baggage away in the train and then turned to his host's pretty daughter, who had motored him and his son to the station.

"Good-by, my dear," said he. "I won't kiss you; I have such a cold."

The son shot a sidelong glance at the girl.

"I say," said he, "can I do anything for you, father?"

Must Be Applied Both Ways.

"I HAVE almost starved to learn," said the struggling student, the first day he hung out his shingle.

"And now you must almost learn to starve," replied the old attorney, who remembered the echoing emptiness of his earliest office.

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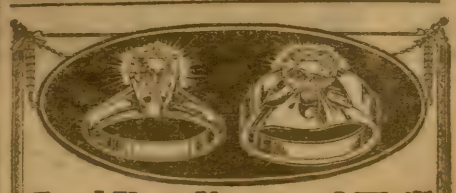

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HIS FRIEND'S WIFE

By Elia W. Peattie

The Woman Who Had No Soul Acquires One Thru the Eternal Triangle

THERE is still much open range within fifty miles of Moose Hill, and there are ranches by the twenties—great ranches of the old style. The country is broken up by gulches and evil-looking buttes, with here and there a level spot streaked red and black and of an unimaginable richness. Here grain, fruit and flowers respond almost exotically to the efforts of the planter.

It was to such a spot that Tiffany Breed brought his wife Marian, who was much more exotic than anything that the over-stimulated soil could produce, that wherever one put her, she was arresting. Her husband had brought her to this wild place for a profound and unspoken reason. He had discovered after two years of marriage that she possessed no more than the beginnings of a soul. He was a Western man, transplanted to an Eastern city. He had met the city eye to eye, brawn to brawn. There was one thing only he had not been able to understand, and that was the woman who was his wife. She eluded him. At first he had supposed it was because he was so simple and she so complicated, so subtle, so mysterious. He tried to explain himself to her, at first gently, by implication; then desperately, as a man might call for help at the bottom of a well. All he heard were the reverberations of his own voice. Men seeing him with this beautiful woman envied him. They thought him marvelously companioned. They did not know that no more lonely man walked the earth.

And that was why he came West. He brought the woman with him because he thought the West a good place for souls. He remembered it to be so. At any rate, disaster was ahead of him in the city; he was no pessimist, but he could see that.

The ranch house on the tract of land he had purchased was low, compact and bare as a bone. It was, nevertheless, rudely convenient, and it looked upon the broken and fantastic line of hills thru purple distance. No furniture had been brought. Tiffany was sick to the soul of the elaborate litter with which this woman had surrounded herself.

"Why not be free for a little while?" he had asked. "Try the life with me for two years, Marian. At the end of that time, if you can't stand it, I'll send you back home."

She agreed. She, too, was rather tired of things as she knew them. And besides, since Tiffany had become so disagreeable, he almost interested her.

He had wired for necessary furniture, and while awaiting it, he and Marian lived at the "Moose Hill Palace," a hostelry which took its grandeur out in its name. Here they met some of the townspeople. State Congressman Cutting and his wife lived here, ranch people, taking their ease after a hard life. Their daughters were married, their sons at Leland Stanford University.

"Except Reno," said Mrs. Cutting. She and Marian were sitting in the "ladies' parlor," a stark place decorated with the horns of slain animals.

"Reno?" echoed Marian vaguely. "Isn't that a town?"

"My son was born there," said Mrs. Cutting. "That is why he is called Reno."

"But he's not at college?" Not that Marian cared, but she had the habit of politeness. Then, too, she could see that this tense, eager woman thought her beautiful. She had never been far away from admiration, and she could not afford to isolate herself from it now.

"Oh, he's long past college years," Mrs. Cutting said, "and he never was interested in his schooling. Yet he does not lose a chance to help me with the library I'm getting up for Moose Hill."

"You are getting together a library?" Marian hardly concealed her surprise. She was answered by the fire that leaped into the woman's eyes.

"Yes, I am, Mrs. Breed, and I want you to help me. I want that library done before I die. I want the building and thousands of books in it, and ways to send them to every man, woman and child who wants them. There mustn't be so lonely a ranch anywhere that the people on it can't have books!"

"It will be very nice," murmured Marian.

The little woman leaped to her feet and strode across the room till she stood before this tall, languid girl in her modish clothes.

"Nice?" she cried. "Nice? Mrs. Breed, you're not understanding what I'm talking about. Sending books out into those lonely places is like sending food to the starving, don't you see? But you don't know—you can't. How could you comprehend the loneliness—the nothingness—the day's coming and going—always seeing the same things, thinking of the same people——"

She could not go on.

Marian rose to the drama in the woman.

"Maybe I shall understand by and by," she said with more interest than she had yet shown. "I'd like to help you. I could get money for the library if you wanted it."

Tears leaped into Mrs. Cutting's overbright eyes.

"There, I was too harsh. I thought you didn't care. You're so—beautiful. Sometimes women like you don't care, except about themselves. You see, now the children are gone, and Mr. Cutting is where men look up to him, there isn't much left for me to do. So I took up this thing. It's my religion now."

"It's a great work for you to do," ventured Marian. She was a trifle ill at ease before this woman who seemed on the verge of reading her. (And she was a woman who did not wish to be read by other women.)

"Reno's helping me," went on the old ranch woman. "As I said, he's not one to care for books. You couldn't educate him in the schools any more than you could a maverick. The free range for him. Yet he carries word of my library everywhere. He holds up cow punchers and horse wranglers and liquor men—makes them contribute. Every month he has their names printed in what he calls a roll of honor, and he mails it all around the country. It would tickle you to see how proud some of the roughest men are to get their names on that roll."

She chuckled slyly, and looked at Marian out of her shining, opaque eyes, which gleamed like glass from amid the innumerable wrinkles of her dark face.

"He does it because he loves his motner," said Marian in her mellifluous voice. Mrs. Cutting moved toward her with outstretched hands. That last sentence had made a slave of her. She became on the instant one of the great company of those who loved this woman, and for no reason that they could tell.

"It's just as sweet of you as it can be to help me," she said. "I must write to Reno about you. He'll be wild to meet you."

A month later, when Marian had been settled in her new home quite long enough to make it her own, there came at a certain twilight a knock at the door. Her Japanese servant flew on noiseless feet to open it, and Marian, standing with the light of the leaping flames upon her heart, turned and beheld a stranger.

"I'm Reno Cutting," the man said heartily in a voice that vibrated, "and I've taken the liberty of calling to thank you for all you've done for my mother. Why, that money you got for her just finished off the job!"

He hurt her with his hand-clasp, and when, against her will, she showed it he made apologies after his own fashion.

"That's the awkward savage I am," he cried, ashamed. "I come to thank you, and I hurt you. You see, the hands I am in the habit of shaking can stand a good deal. I'm a cattle buyer, ma'am, and spend my time going over the country. I meet many sorts—but not all sorts. No one like you. I have never met any one like you before."

He had the wide-eyed wonder of a child. Marian smiled gloriously.

"Sit down, please," she said, motioning to a chair with a gesture which enchanted him. "I've heard volumes about you."

"From mother? I've given her more worry than all the rest of her children put together. That's why she likes me best."

She Leaped to Her Feet Like a Tigress, Stung to Madness by the Affront.

He was curiously at his ease; and he was, in his way, wonderful. More a man, Marian decided, than any representative of his sex she ever had met. His great frame seemed to house a completely emancipated spirit. She had never seen glances from eyes at once so bold and so respectful—sun-flecked eyes, full of light mockeries.

She made him stay till her husband came, and Breed induced him to remain for dinner. When they had eaten, and Marian had played upon the piano for them, the two men talked together and she sat apart regarding them and comparing one with the other. There was an academic decision in her husband's accent; bluff authority in the tones of his guest. Her husband wore glasses over hard-worked eyes; Reno Cutting could have looked at the sun and hardly faltered. The city man was tall, slender, elegant; the other stood, sat, moved squarely, with force. Each was a strong man after his fashion. One had worshiped her—still suffered because of her; the other was capable of doing so. It occurred to her that, for a moment, neither was thinking of her. She moved nearer to the fire, and dropped there, her pale blue draperies falling about her exquisitely. She knew well the contour she presented. She knew when the men began to think about her again. Their conversation faltered. She was happily aware that she irritated them: that she got in the way of their communion. She pretended to yawn—beautifully. Then she smiled.

What was it this stranger made her think of?

Ah, yes, of Sigmund when he entered the hut of Siglinda and spring burst into flower and song in the wood without.

Moose Hill was interested in the erection of two new buildings—the Government laboratory for the investigation of diseases of cattle, and the edifice that was to house the Fremont County Circulating Library. Tiffany Breed was superintending completion of the first; Reno Cutting was pushing along the beginnings of the second.

The two men saw each other every day. Cutting came often to Breed's ranch, and Sunday he rode with Breed and his wife over the wild, strange country, ravaged by ancient fires. Eagles swung above them; coyotes howled from the rose and purple buttes; and the vast droves of cattle browsing the brown grass watched them with startled eyes.

So the long winter wore along. In the cities there were shifting, thronged boulevards, there was opera, there were theaters, gatherings of people in the amazing new fashions, dancing the amazing new dances. Marian heard from her friends all this; to her surprise it was no more to her than the breaking of surf on an unknown shore. She who knew Paris, the spas, the Floridian idleness, had found something more stimulating than anything that had hitherto come into her life. She, who had thought herself weary even of conquest, awoke each morning with the eagerness of a child. She throbbed with life; she expanded in beauty; never had her laugh been so like music, her eyes so brilliant and compelling. She exuded some power impossible to define. Perhaps it might be called a conscious femininity.

And she was waiting for an event—waiting for the hour of Reno Cutting's declaration of love for her. She had not yet made up her mind how she would receive it. She knew he was an uncompromising man. True to himself, to his friends, to his inherited, hardy ideals. He meant to be what he would have called "true." When, at last—and inevitably—his outburst came, it would be terrifying and compelling. She knew she could not play with him as she had played with other men. But she did not wish to play with him. She who had long euthralled was herself the enthralled one now. She grew breathless, dreaming of the splendid hour that must come. She wondered where it would be—how it would terminate. She did not feel responsible for the outcome. If he said, "Come," she would go. He was the only man she ever had met for whom she would care to make a sacrifice.

Tiffany Breed was called to Washington. He asked his wife to go with him, but she refused.

"If I go East I might never come

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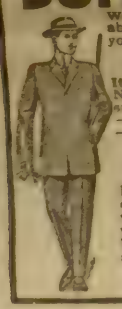

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back again," she said tauntingly. "Best let sleeping dogs lie, Tiffany."

Maybe he thought so, too. He went without her.

Cutting kept away from the ranch then. Marian, wrapped in rich and intoxicating reveries, saw the slow days drag by, and he did not come. The silent, vision-haunted nights throbbed with him—yet he did not come. She knew the same tumult that raged in her was driving him half-mad; knew by all of her newly-awakened intuitions. Yet he held silence and distance between them.

"He is very strong," she said to herself. His fall would be all the greater.

Then, one night as she sat before her fire, robed in flame-colored silk wonderful with its Japanese embroidery, thinking of him, summoning him with her whole being, she heard the hoofs of his horse without the door She arose, sailed to the door like a conquering ship, and he saw her, all crimson in the flaunting gown and the blazing firelight. He blanketed his horse and came in, and when the door was closed they melted into each other's embrace.

"You called me," he whispered, covering her hair with kisses, "you kept calling me—all day and all night. I had to come."

Marian did not try to speak. She drew back from him, leaning over his arm, so that he could see the perfect curve of throat and neck, the deep solicitation of her exquisite eyes.

He never had imagined that such beauty could exist. He bent over her, drunk with his happiness. Then a sound made him start. The latch of the door had loosened. In another moment it had blown open. He released her while he closed it. Something on the table clattered to the floor. Mechanically he stooped to raise it. It was a picture of his mother, set in a silver frame, her weather-bitten, plain, too eager face contrasting almost absurdly with the elaborately chased frame. He laid it on the table face down and held out his arms to the woman who stood there, tranced and entrancing. But he, after all, had given her a moment in which to summon her coquetries.

She swept by him toward the fire.

"So you thought you heard me calling you?"

"If I did not, I should not be here."

"And now that you are here——"

"And now that I am here in another man's house in his absence, I will say what I came to say. It's a magnificent hour for us, but it's a shameful hour, too."

She shivered a trifle. He was much more lucid than she had expected to find him. She doubted if her spell had been complete enough.

"Did you ever eat wild fruit, Marian?" he asked, speaking her name for the first time. "I don't suppose you ever did. It ripens by itself, and it tastes of the sun. Nothing else satisfies the craving in man for sweet and sour the way that does. Nothing. Well, this love of ours is wild fruit, and the tang of it—the tang of it maddens me, the way the loco weed does a horse. I've eaten it and you've eaten it, and now the question is——"

But his deliberation enraged her.

"What question can there be?" she demanded. Her face had grown flushed, her eyes were flaming.

"The question as to whether or not we shall go away together forever," he said slowly. "Just that."

She took a step toward him, almost menacingly.

"Do you hesitate?" she cried. She had seen men who loved her less, broken before her, groveling at her dress-hem. She loved this man for his strength, but she saw that she might hate him for it, too.

"Of course I hesitate," he replied in his downright, boyish way that seemed so inconsistent with the maturity of his passion for her. "Wouldn't I naturally hesitate to break up a friend's home? Wouldn't I hesitate to place you where no woman in the state would want to take you into her home? Wouldn't I hesitate to blacken my own name? Men out here think they can count on Reno Cutting. If I go to the bad, it does a lot more than——"

"Can you stand there and argue?" she said, lowering her voice and bending her head with almost menacing intensity.

"It isn't as if I loved you alone," went on the man, doggedly. "I love women. I've been brought up to revere them. I've seen my mother go thru her life like an angel with a sword."

She stood looking at him in amazement. She could not make him out.

"I've the kind of love my mother knew, to measure things by," he said after a moment. He had gone to the table and lifted her picture in his hand, and he looked at it almost sternly. "She—she had such a reverence for life, 'for life's sake,' she said. When my father cut his foot in the sawmill, she carried him a mile on her back, and as you know, she's about half his size. It wasn't strength of body that gave her the power to do that, was it? My youngest sister was born out on a timber claim miles from anybody. Father was at town, and there were only us children there. I was the oldest and she turned to me. 'Don't you be frightened,' she said, 'I'll tell you what to do, son, and you must stand by me. We all came into the world the same way, and it's a holy mystery. I've got to live for all of your sakes.' That's what she said to me. I went down on my knees to her, and she gave me strength to see her thru that day. I've worshiped women ever since."

Marian Breed drew back from him. She sank on a seat beside the fire and put her hands about her knees.

"Go on," she said with quiet satire.

"I'd want my sons to look on their mother the same way," he said. "That same way." He stood for a moment, thinking profoundly. Then setting the picture down again he came toward his friend's wife. His hands were clinched, and the muscles of his tense arms showed thru his sleeves. His face was dark, almost distorted.

"I am mad with you," he said so low she could hardly hear him. "I love you day and night, always, everywhere. You fill the world for me—now. You are in my blood, in my brain——"

He broke off and lifted one fist heavenward.

"And I am going to leave you, so help me God!"

She leaped to her feet like a tigress, stung to madness by the affront. For the first time in her life she had been humiliated. She, whom men of cultivation, of fortune, of wisdom had loved, was being rejected by this man of the wilderness.

"You—coward!" she said.

He shook his head as if the word had no meaning for him.

"You will never be loved again as I love you now," he said.

He went out before her unbelieving eyes and closed the door. She heard the sharp clatter of his horse's hoofs on the frozen earth.

She ran to the door and shrilled his name into the night, but he could not have heard her, for he went on. She wanted to strike some one dead. If there had been anything at hand with which she could have destroyed herself, perhaps, in that first frantic moment—that hideous moment when nothing opposed itself to her rage—she would have done so. As it was, she stood with her back against the closed door, inwardly raging. The storm of her shame and misery tore at her like a wild beast. She grew weak and sick with the torment, and after a long time she walked toward the fire, groping her way and holding to the furniture. Passing the table, her glance fell upon the picture of Maria Cutting, the little, stanch, wind-tanned, hardy pioneer—the woman who had defeated her. She snatched the picture from the table, meaning to hurl it into the fire, but something in the humorous twist of the wrinkles about the eyes and mouth withheld her. It was as if the little old trouble-fighter was in the room, laughing at human passions, at life's chances and changes—at the eternal Mutability.

Marion Breed kept the picture in her hand, and sank upon the huge fur rug before the fire. She was very cold, and she reached for a cloak on the divan and wrapped herself in it. But still she was shivering. Her teeth chattered. Sometimes waves of blackness went before her eyes. But after a time, these passed. Thru her surging misery she was able to study that face in the photograph—the face of the woman who had made her son worship women. Marian had an imagination, tho she had not put it to its highest use; but it stirred in her now. She began to picture the incidents of this woman's life. She saw her always giving of her strength, her love, her service. Her courage had been as a beacon to those about her. And she saw, too, scenes from her own moving picture show of life, and as she looked, shame shook her, for it was as if she ran thru the world snatching the goods of others—gathering their blossoms and their fruit. That the hands that snatched had been beautiful and the feet that ran had been white, she now knew made no difference.

As Saul saw a light, so, before the cold gray dawn came over the scorified buttes, Marian Breed saw one, too. In the hour of her defeat came the beginnings of her victory. With slow travail there came into the world that day a woman's soul.

* * *

Kiddin' the Neighbors.

CASEY had been married only a week when he discovered that his wife, who had assumed control of household and larder, was inclined to be stingy.

He had been working in his small garden one afternoon when wife came to the back door and called out in strident tones: "Terrence, come in to tay, toast and eggs!"

Terrence dropped his spade in astonishment and ran into the kitchen. "Sure, ye're only kiddin' me," he said.

"No, Terrence," said the wife: "it's not ye; it's the neighbors I'm kiddin'."

* * *

The Old-fashioned Way

THE village show was being held, and among the competitors was a certain worthy, whose exhibits were suspected of not being bona fide, the property of the exhibitor, according to the rules. Accosting him, one of the officials said: "Jamie, were the roses you're showin' grown within the proper radius?"

"No, they were na," retorted Jamie, haughtily. "They were grown i' the open air i' the guid auld fashioned way."

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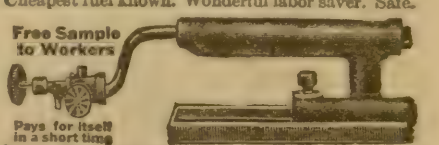

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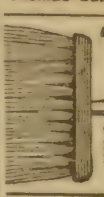

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The Quarterbreed

(Continued From Page 11)

ever. He had not been barred from an inspection of the documents relating to the new treaty with the tribe, and among them he had found Vandervyn's alleged contract. It purported to appoint the young man attorney and tribal representative and to fix his compensation at 20 per cent of any moneys appropriated to the tribe in payment for the ceded mineral lands.

Hardy had at first considered the signatures forged. But examination with a microscope had shown him that the thumb-prints were identical with those on the memorandum of the proceedings of the tribal council. He had been quick to perceive that his only chance of defeating the outrageous contract was to bring about either an executive or a congressional investigation. There had been no difficulty in divining the manner in which Vandervyn had obtained the signatures at the tribal council.

Yet so far his every move had been blocked. He had interested one man of official position or influence after another, only to be met later with evasion or procrastination or even outright rebuffs. One door after another had been shut in his face. At last he had found himself regarded as a crank, than which, in Washington, no more opprobrious term can be applied to a man.

With the opening of Congress the influences opposed to him had at last been able to overcome the opposition that had delayed a trial of the charges against him. The afternoon that he came back to his shabby lodgings after a final attempt to obtain an interview with the Chief of the Indian Bureau, he was officially notified to appear the following morning for trial by court-martial.

He already knew the charges against him. They included desertion, failure to report at Vancouver Barracks, and, under the head of conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman, his concealment of the developed mine and of Redbear's attempt to misweigh the cattle.

The nearness of the trial brought matters to a desperate pass with him. He must act quickly.

It was the night of the first ball at the White House. As usual, there was a great crush. Hardy, in conventional evening dress—not in official costume, as the regulations required—managed in some mysterious manner to obtain entrance. The secret-service men had no instructions with regard to him, and considerable time passed before any one inimical to him heeded his unobtrusive presence.

He, in turn, was so intent upon maneuvering to have himself spoken to by that most genial of hosts, the President, that he failed to see Marie until she spoke to him. The first sight of her bewildered him, and his bow did not altogether hide the effects of the delicious shock given him by her dazzling beauty. But he quickly recovered his self-possession when he saw that she was with Vandervyn. That young man, tho more boyishly handsome than ever, bore himself with rather a sullen air. He met Hardy's clear gaze with a forced smile. The smile became still more forced when the girl transferred her hand from his arm to Hardy's.

"Only a very few minutes," she soothed the disappointed lover.

"Whatever you say!" he deferred to her caprice, and he drew back to speak to a sharp-eyed man near the President.

Hardy was gazing into the wonderful blue-black eyes of his companion. They were as inscrutable as when he had last looked into their depths. He tried to speak calmly, but his voice shook.

"Do you know that you are by far the most beautiful woman here?"

Her long lashes drooped and rose again to disclose the same inscrutable look.

"So I have been told several times already—I wished a few moments with you, that I might thank you for your generosity. It has given me the great opportunity of my trip abroad and this visit in Washington."

"I am saving all the reports of your social triumphs," he said. "They have made me very happy."

Again the girl's lashes drooped. "That is good of you—it is quite necessary for me to become the rage—if I am to force a recognition from Reggie's relatives. He says that, fortunately, his fiancee has become interested in another man who is quite as eligible as himself."

Hardy's eyes contracted, yet he did not falter:

"Since it will bring you happiness, I—wish him—good fortune."

"You do?" The question was almost an exclamation. But the girl at once regained her quiet composure. "I do not understand. If you wish him good fortune, why then do you seek to prevent him from receiving his compensation as attorney for the tribe?"

"I said good fortune," replied Hardy. "Any money paid him on that contract would be tainted."

Marie arched her black eyebrows. "Is it not true that he will get thru a much larger appropriation than otherwise would have been made?"

"The lands are fully worth the amount agreed upon," stated Hardy. "The tribe should receive all the appropriation. Honest lobbying would carry the bill thru at a cost of a few hundred dollars. These supposed friends of the tribe want millions."

"Do you wish to deprive me of the share that I would receive thru him?"

"Yes—of every dishonest dollar," said Hardy, his mouth stern, tho his eyes besought her to forgive his harshness. "You have enough already."

"Are you certain?" she rejoined. "You may have heard that mines often pinch out or run into valueless ore—— You can guess why Pere and I have told no one, least of all Reggie."

Hardy remained unshaken. "If he is worthy of you, that will make no difference to him."

"But myself? I am already used to luxury," pleaded the girl.

"Down in your heart you know the values in life that are real," he said. "You do not wish for wealth gained thru fraud.

"I have not admitted that there is any fraud in the contract."

"Perhaps it is as well," he remarked. "You should not doubt your future husband."

She flashed him an odd, quizzical look. "No, I cannot doubt my future husband now, Captain Hardy. I must believe in him if I am to be happy, must I not?"

"Yes," agreed Hardy.

She uttered a gay little trill of laughter.

"That is so good of you to say it, Captain! It makes me feel that I really must do something for you in return. May I not offer you a little loan of, say, three or four thousand dollars? I understand that, for some strange reason—or unreason—you have refused your pay as captain."

"My resignation has not been withdrawn, and I am engaged in a private enterprise. I cannot draw pay as an officer in the service," explained Hardy.

"Few would be so quixotic," she argued. "Most would make the excuse that an attempt to frustrate what they considered a wrong to others is not to be considered a private enterprise."

"I must beg to differ with you, Miss Dupont."

"Then let it pass. But the little loan?"

"Very good of you to offer. However, I believe I have enough left to last me thru. And in any event, I could not impose on your generosity. The money would be used against him—which, you see, would hardly do."

"Then you refuse any loan?"

"It was most kind of you to make the offer."

"Don Quixote de la Mancha!" she murmured.

"Tilting at machine windmills!" he replied.

Tho there was no trace of bitterness or satire in his wit, her chin lifted to the angle of offended pride. "That is sufficient, Captain Hardy. May I ask you to take me back to him?"

Vandervyn was waiting for her near the President. As they approached him she gave Hardy a look of half-relentment. "You must understand, Captain, that I must do as my heart dictates, tho I confess that lobbying is far from agreeable to me. I have already met His Excellency, and he has been so kind as to promise me a hearing."

"I cannot wish you success," he replied.

She gave him a quizzical glance and turned away with Vandervyn.

Standing in the eager, jostling crowd that waited for a word or even a nod from the President, he fully appreciated the ease with which, in the midst of so great a crush, she managed to obtain several moments' conversation apart with the Nation's chief magistrate.

She was still beside the President when the sharp-eyed man to whom Vandervyn had spoken came around beside Hardy, and murmured a few words in his ear. Hardy looked him in the eye, bowed, and quietly started to move away. The man followed him until he had left the White House.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CONDEMNED.

THE court-martial began its session at nine in the morning, and the trial of Hardy was over before three in the afternoon. Vandervyn testified to the suppression by the accused of the existence of the developed mine and of Redbear's misconduct.

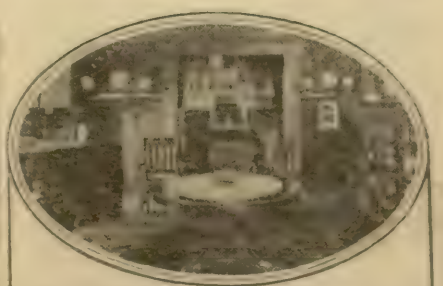
Hardy's statements in explanation of his actions were as brief as they were cold and dry. Redbear's offense being the first within his knowledge, he had put the issue clerk on probation. Acting as a civil officer, he had considered the question of withholding any mention of the mine as a matter within his discretion. When interrogated whether he had not taken advantage of this suppression to enter the contest and win the mine for himself, his bald admission of the fact, unaccompanied by any explanation of his motives, was received by his officer judges with marked gravity.

The other charges were far more serious, and he opposed them with vigor. He denied emphatically any intention to desert or to remain permanently absent from his proper duties without leave, and showed the telegram from a high official in the War Department that had led him to believe his resignation and application for leave of absence would be at once favorably acted upon by his commanding officer at Vancouver Barracks. This, in some circumstances, might have been considered sufficient excuse for his conduct. But his refusal to explain his reason for taking advantage of his secret knowledge of the mine perceptibly influenced the members of the court to doubt the statement of his purpose in coming to Washington.

Tho the court-martial adjourned without rendering its findings, he left the courtroom ten years older in appearance than when he entered. The regretful, commiserating glance of the most friendly of his judges seemed plainly to indicate what would be the findings. The thought of voluntarily resigning from the service had been hard. To be cashiered was almost unendurable.

Yet he walked out with his back straight and his head well up. He went directly to the White House, and sent in a written application for an interview with the President. It was refused. He went to his lodgings, and spent the remainder of the day and half the night drafting and redrafting a concise statement of his argument against Vandervyn's contract. This he addressed to the President, and stamped for mailing. He wrote nothing with regard to his own case.

When, near morning, he at last fell asleep, he was so near exhaustion that he did not waken until late. The hour set for the reconvening of the court-martial had already come. He sprang into his uniform with a celerity that



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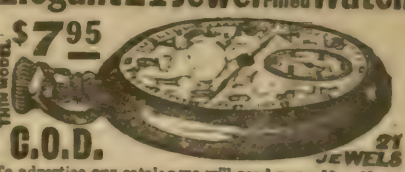

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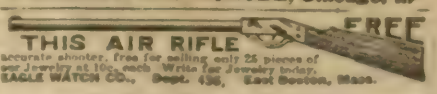

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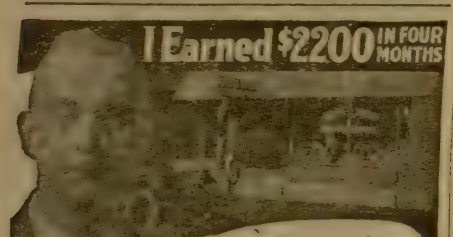

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might have reminded a fellow officer of reveille in cadet barracks at West Point.

The worn soles of his highly polished shoes beat a tattoo on the carpetless old stairs by which he descended to the street. He did not turn to go in for a belated breakfast at the meager table of his landlady. He hastened along the few feet of narrow hall to the street door. As he drew it open another man in uniform stepped into the doorway and confronted him. The other officer saluted. Hardy responded mechanically. For all his cool look, he was astonished. The man before him was the President's military aid.

"Captain Floyd Hardy?"

"At your service."

"You should now be in attendance upon the court-martial," stated the aid with cold severity.

"I shall explain to the court," replied Hardy. "If not delayed, I shall be only a few——"

"You will come with me," interrupted the aid, still more severely. "Your conduct has been brought to the attention of the President. It is to be seen, sir, whether you will continue to refuse to answer the inquiries of your superiors."

Hardy went white, but his jaw set firm with grim resolution. He stepped out beside the aid, and crossed the sidewalk to the waiting motor. As they were whirled away over the sleety asphalt, the aid sat with more than military stiffness, his head and body half averted from his companion as if to avoid contamination. Hardy sat as stiffly at the other extreme of the seat.

The ride was short. The car made a sudden turn, and curved around to the executive offices of the President. Hardy looked at his companion, perplexed. The face of the aid showed only the stern watchfulness of one who has a reputedly dangerous prisoner under arrest. At the entrance he stepped behind, as if apprehensive that Hardy might attempt to escape. A doorkeeper conducted them along a corridor into a small waiting-room. He passed into the room beyond, but reappeared in a few moments, and signed to Hardy to enter.

Hardy stepped into the room, and the door was closed behind him. The aid and the doorkeeper had remained outside. Hardy looked around with a frown of perplexity. Across the room a man sat writing at a businesslike desk. There was no one else present.

The man turned in his swivel chair, and abruptly made a beckoning gesture. Hardy's hand went up in salute as he stepped forward. He was in the presence of the Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy.

The President looked him up and down with a severe glance.

"You are Captain Floyd Hardy?"

"Yes, sir."

"The same who suppressed the late insurrection in the Sulus?"

"I happened to be in command at the time, sir."

"After that you obtained a detail, your conduct in discharge of which has resulted in your trial by court-martial on serious charges. I have before me the findings of the court. The circumstances are exceptional. Because of your record and of certain statements that have been presented to me, I have been persuaded to give you an opportunity to explain your conduct."

Hardy saluted. "Permit me, sir, to first present for your consideration a matter relating to the interests of the tribe which——"

"Stop!" ordered the President. "Others are waiting for interviews. I can give you only ten minutes. If you expend them on this other matter you will have no further opportunity to state your own case."

"The evidence before the court-martial covered the facts, sir. If those facts sustain the charges against me, then I am guilty, and desire no clemency. That is all I have to say on my own case, sir. With regard to the matter which I desire to present——"

"Sit down!" ordered the President. "You have nine minutes. Be brief."

Hardy seated himself and proceeded to present his argument against the Vandervyn contract. He spoke deliberately, but with a conciseness that covered what he had to say fully and clearly, in words as forceful as they were few. The President listened attentively, but with no change in his expression. At the end of eight minutes Hardy stopped.

The President showed a trace of surprise. "Is that all you have to say? There is still a minute."

"That is all, sir," replied Hardy, rising.

The President touched a call button, but raised his finger. "One moment. What if I should confront you with witnesses?"

"As I have stated, sir, my only request is that all the witnesses in the case be examined."

"There are some already at hand. You shall see what they have to say about your charges."

The aid appeared, and immediately went out again at a sign from the President. He returned with Vandervyn and Marie. At sight of Hardy the young man stopped short, but, meeting the President's cordial smile, came forward with easy assurance. Marie did not look at Hardy, as she followed.

The President addressed Vandervyn: "Captain Hardy has declined to ask for clemency. I have decided to sustain the findings of the court-martial. In face of all this, he has had the temerity to make a charge of fraud against your Indian contract."

Vandervyn nodded. "Captain Hardy is too skilled a strategist not to realize that the best way to shield himself is to raise the cry of 'stop thief!' against others. Does he allege that the signatures to my contract are forged?"

"The signatures are genuine. They were obtained by fraud," bluntly charged Hardy.

"My word is as good or perhaps somewhat better than that of a cashiered officer," rejoined Vandervyn.

"You deny the charge," the President stated rather than inquired.

"Most emphatically," pleasantly agreed Vandervyn. He looked significantly from Hardy to Marie. "As a soldier—until recently—the gallant Captain probably believes in the saying that all is fair in war and love."

Marie lowered her eyes. The President looked thoughtful. "Of course, Mr. Vandervyn, there can be no question, when it is a matter of your word against his. Yet, were there any other witnesses than yourselves and the Indians?"

"Your Excellency evidently has not seen the contract," said Vandervyn. "It is duly witnessed by Charlie Redbear, the official interpreter, and by his sister."

"Ah, the interpreter, you say? This matter may be rumored in the House and even in the Senate. It will be well for you to send for the man."

Vandervyn shrugged. "Can't do it, even to oblige you, Mr. President. The fellow has gone to the place where cold storage is unknown. My uncle told you about the affair. The fellow was drunk; he aimed his 'gun' at me. I supposed it loaded, and shot him in self-defense. Hardy was present. He can't deny what I say, without forswearing himself."

Hardy met the President's look of inquiry, and bowed in confirmation of the statement. The President again looked thoughtful. "That leaves the man's sister as the only witness to the contract. It would be well if she could be produced."

The aid left the room. Vandervyn again shrugged. "Search has been made for her, Mr. President. All that could be learned from her Indian relatives was that she had been very sick and gone away. Of course that meant to the happy hunting-grounds. There was no other place that she could have gone."

The aid returned to the room leading a tall young woman who was dressed in a Parisian tailored suit that Vandervyn had last seen on Marie. She was gloved and heavily veiled, and she entered the room with perceptible timidity. Marie went to take her arm in a reassuring clasp and raise the veil. At no time since their coming to Washington had Vandervyn been given so much as a glimpse of Miss Dupont's reputed Hindu maid. This undoubtedly was the woman, and he looked at her with sharp curiosity as Marie raised the veil. Marie stepped aside, and gave him a full view of the girl's face.

"Oinna!" he exclaimed.

"Yes. Is it not a happy surprise?" said Marie.

She smiled at the shrinking girl, and drew her about to the President. "My dear, this is the great White Father of all Indians and of our tribe—he is our father—— Your Excellency, this is Mrs. Reginald Vandervyn."

The blow was given with merciless force. As Vandervyn gaped at Marie, her eyes flamed with a sudden upleaping of fierce exultance.

He gasped and choked out: "You—you!—All these months—this—you—Indian!"

"Yes, Indian—to you, even as she was Indian to you!" cried the girl. "You have been so eager to marry a 'breed girl—here is one, already your wife!"

"It's a lie, a black lie!" denied Vandervyn. "I never married her!"

"You took her by tribal custom, and you told her that you were taking her legally according to the common law."

"She cannot prove I lived with her openly as her husband," rejoined Vandervyn.

The President looked at the shrinking Oinna with kindly gravity. "Do you wish him to acknowledge you as his wife?"

"No, no, sir!" she disclaimed. "I don't want him any more."

"I am pleased to hear you say that," replied the President. He turned to Vandervyn. "I understand this witness is prepared to testify that the signatures to your contract were obtained on the false representation that it was a second copy of the minutes of the tribal council."

"It's a lie!" hoarsely replied the young man. "Hardy knows nothing about it. There's only her word against mine."

"We can send for the Indian witnesses, if necessary. Another matter—at the inquest you testified under oath that a certain Indian killed Agent Nogen, and that you and Redbear then killed the murderer. When you shot Redbear, you rode off, certain that he was dead. He lived long enough to confess himself the murderer of Agent Nogen. Why did you perjure yourself at the inquest?"

"You can't prove it," defiantly challenged Vandervyn. "I stand by my testimony. This squaw and Hardy have

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hatched up the lie between them. Even if Redbear made such a confession, it is only hearsay and not legal evidence."

"Your friend Redbear seems to have enjoyed shooting at agents," remarked the President. "He also confessed to having made the two attempts on the life of Captain Hardy. In view of your perjured testimony at the Nogen inquest, one is led to infer a not improbable connection between those attempts and your enmity to Captain Hardy. But the point at present is whether you still insist upon the validity of your contract. Do you wish an official investigation that will take the evidence of the Indian witnesses?"

A cold sweat was gathering on Vandervyn's forehead. He looked at Marie. She turned from him, afraid that he might misconstrue the womanly softness into which her fierce resentment had melted. He wheeled about, and left the room, sullen, unrepentant, defiant.

"A very great pity," commented the President. "Young and clever, handsome, well educated, good social standing—yet all wasted! Courage misdirected; no sense of shame; immoral, rather than immoral. He will ride hard to still harder falls than this one, or else to what the world calls success—— But I am too busy a man to moralize. If you will pardon me, ladies, there is to be a Cabinet meeting."

He bowed to them, and then confronted Hardy, once more the Commander in Chief. "Sir, I warned you that if you did not speak in your own defense, you would have no other opportunity. I shall not reverse my approval of the findings of the court-martial."

Hardy had stood an amazed and dumfounded spectator to the rejection and disgrace of his rival. But thruout it all Marie had never once looked at him. If her scornful casting off of Vandervyn had roused any hopes for himself, they must have been dashed when she led Oinna away without favoring him with so much as a glance of recognition. There was a slight stoop in his shoulders as he saluted the President.

"If the sentence approved by Your Excellency does not make association with me scandalous," he said, "I beg leave to express my thanks for the intimation that you will invalidate the fraudulent contract."

Without replying, the President abruptly faced about to his desk. Hardy again saluted, and marched from the room as if on dress parade.

CHAPTER XXX.
THE SENTENCE.

IN THE anteroom the doorkeeper waved Hardy to a door on the right. It led him into a stenographers' room. He saw the flounce of a woman's skirt behind a revolving bookcase near the far end of the room, and paused. Some one stepped into the room after him, and touched him authoritatively on the shoulder.

"One moment, Captain Hardy—your sentence."

He turned, and faced the President's aid with the clear, unflinching gaze of a brave man about to be shot. The aid saluted with punctilious formality. Hardy responded with equal formality. The aid presented an official document, saluted, and withdrew from the room.

For a long moment Hardy stood with the decree of his fate slowly crumpling in his hand. His eyes were fixed on vacancy. Doubtless he was seeing the years of soldierly comradeship and duty that now lay in the past and the vision of the career to which he was to have given the utmost of his powers. He had always loved his profession—and now——

The woman whose skirt he had seen was in front of him before he became aware of her presence. He found himself looking into the cool half-mocking face of Marie.

"Are you afraid to read your sentence?" she taunted. "Had it not been for you, he would have had the mine and a million from his contract and me. The President conferred with Senator Clemmer an hour ago. The treaty appropriation bill will be passed with a clause that no commission is to be paid for the services of any tribal agent or representative. He has lost everything. And now—I am waiting to see you read that paper."

Hardy drew himself up, opened the envelope, took out the document and read.

As Marie saw the look of blank incredulity that came into his face, her eyes flashed under the lowering veil of their long lashes. He stared up at her, but was too dazed to perceive the change in her expression.

"Acquitted — honorably — on all charges!" he murmured. "On all charges! Honorable mention recommended—— Approved—the President!"

Marie smiled with cool condescension. "Merely a question of doing justice to you, Captain Hardy. When a man has done his duty, however harshly, it is the duty of others to see that he receives just compensation. I take credit for having helped to bring this about."

"You?" he exclaimed. "Of course, tho, if you really did not love him——"

"That does not follow. You must know I did love him. But to find that I had for rival another 'breed girl—one not half so beautiful as I—I could not endure the thought. You have seen the proof that there is a good deal of my mother's red grandfather in my blood. No, I had to give him up, and I have decided to marry another man."

"Another!" echoed Hardy.

"Will you not congratulate me?" she asked.

He rallied. "I congratulate him. After what has happened, I feel confident that you must have chosen one more worthy of you."

"He is!" declared the girl, her glorious eyes melting with tenderness. "He is far more worthy of me than I am of him!"

With an effort she recovered her cool composure.

"But now, before going, I wish to take this opportunity to discharge in a way the obligation that, as a member of the tribe, I owe to you for your services. I shall therefore return the mine to you."

She held out a document. He stepped back.

"No, Miss Dupont," he said. "I cannot accept it."

"You must. I took it from you. Tho I have used the income from it not altogether for personal gratification, you must realize that my pride will not permit me to keep it any longer. Let me add that it has not pinched out, as you may have inferred from what I said at the ball. It is a bonanza."

"I regret that I cannot accept it," he replied. "A captain's pay is quite sufficient for a—bachelor."

Marie gave him a mocking glance. "Really now, Captain Hardy, you do not expect me to believe you will long remain unmarried?"

He tried his best to conceal how her frivolity tortured him. "You may not believe it, Miss Dupont. Yet it is true."

"It is not," she contradicted. "When we were abroad, Pere and I went to Monte Carlo. I fancy the gambling spirit infected me. Let us settle the ownership of the mine with a wager. If you do not marry this year, I agree to keep it. But if you marry within that time, you will accept it back from me on your wedding day."

"It is not fair for me to bet on a certainty; but if you insist, I agree to the wager," said Hardy.

"Then be prepared to take the mine a week from today," she bantered.

He tore his gaze away from the lovely face whose gay smile appeared so heartlessly mocking.

"You—cannot realize—how this——"

She handed him another sealed envelope.

"Here is the order detailing you to special service with the General Staff for the winter. You will then be required to return to the Reservation and carry out all the plans recommended by you for the civilizing of the tribe. Your mare is in the same stable as the thorobred that I have bought to use as her riding mate."

The changed tone in the girl's voice compelled Hardy to look up. In her radiant eyes he saw a look that could not be mistaken. The smile that had seemed so mocking was now tenderly teasing.

"Marie—you——" he stammered. "Are you certain it is—love—not a passing feeling of pity?"

"Pity! For you?" she cried. "Do you think I could dare to pity you?—a man like you! I could not have been so presumptuous even had those treacherous conspirators succeeded in crushing you. Do you think it was pity that made me live a lie all this time—that forced me to flout you and accept his detestable attentions?"

Her voice sank to a note of deep humility.

"I know how very unworthy of you I am. Yet I hope I am not so unworthy as that first day at the coulee, when I scorned you, and you, with your skill and courage and moderation, saved us without harming those whose attack he had wantonly brought upon us. I was a coquette—a coquette infatuated with the kind of man with whom a coquette deserves to be infatuated. But I was not altogether frivolous. I soon perceived your immeasurable superiority over him. Only my head could not overcome the fascination that had bound my heart. My soul sought to free itself from the spell—I struggled and prayed —— Yet not until there at the mine, when you showed yourself the bravest, the most generous——"

She flung out her arms to him in piteous appeal. "Captain! My Captain! Say that you do not think me altogether what he—thought me!"

Hardy drew her hands together, and bent to kiss them with reverent passion.

"Dearest," he replied, "you forget that other day in the coulee—that day when you thought me dying. I gazed up into your eyes, and I saw the look of my mother."

The End.

Compensation.

THE soldier was showing how fields are won.

"The worst time I ever had," he said, "was when we were besieged. We only had one bite a day for a fortnight, and that was horse flesh."

The young soldier sitting at the other side of the taproom chipped in:

"I remember living a month on one bite, and that was out of my own leg."

The old soldier flushed.

"I don't believe it!" he said angrily.

"Believe it or not, it's true!" said the young man. "A dog took a mouthful out of my leg and the compensation kept me like a lord for four weeks."

Long and Narrow.

THE "Amurrican" wasn't exactly a prevaricator, but he loved to tell tall stories. He was staying with a clergyman in England, and asked his host to pull him up if he went too far. One night, during a dinner party, the Yankee started to describe a new greenhouse he was having built. Warming to his subject he said:

"I guess it'll be some greenhouse, too. It's got to accommodate giant tropical plants, so I'm having it made a thousand feet long, a hundred feet high"—here he caught his host's eye—"and—an inch wide!" he finished hastily.

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"Sure."

"And you wouldn't give me up for a million dollars?"

"H'm! Anybody offered that?"

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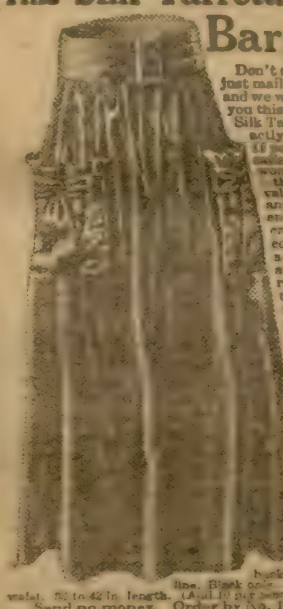

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He Was Little, but Game

Puff's only chance of getting the girl was to earn an officership, but tho this was well-nigh impossible, his remarkable bravery won her love instanter.

HE WAS little, but game as a woodcock, was Student Puff of the officers' training camp. Strange to say, he attached himself immediately to Harlan, pastmaster in military affairs, who wished to re-enter the service and was doing so by this route. It was understood from the beginning that Harlan was to get his majority—at least nothing less than a captaincy, depending on orders from the War Department, as to the grade of commissions issued.

There was nothing in it for Puff—he was not trying to get pointers from his experienced friend; it was real attraction, the profound admiration the diminutive always has for the big, for Harlan was big and wholesome, and a soldier to his socks, born to command, yet to consider, which, after all, is most essential to success.

The first week in camp Puff had told his story. It was something like this, necessarily brief because there was never five minutes at any time to talk of anything but work. The sergeant's whistle was everlastingly blowing for something, and even study period was punctuated by signals for this, that and the other thing, that would drive a civilian crazy.

"I was never meant for a soldier!" Puff began, slamming shut his "Manual of Arms," and leaning his head dejectedly on his hands. "I am not patriotic enough to give up my profession at my age—I'm 30—and try to learn how to stick knives into people. But, you see, I did it for her."

Harlan listened attentively without speaking. He also was pastmaster at confidences and knew that a reply would only check the flow; and, judging from Puff's recent dejection, he needed to get it off his mind.

"She's a dear girl, the dearest thing in the world, and I'd die for her," went on Puff, "but that would be a cinch beside all this. She got all worked up about the war, goes about organizing Red Cross units, and all that, and made up her mind that she would marry an Army officer and an officer only. If I happen to be that officer, all well and good; if I don't, good night to my chances.

"Well, I got in here by the skin of my teeth and thought everything was all right with me now, for she's been nicer than she's ever been before, but she's got it into her head lately that I've got to be a captain or nothing. It will be a general next if she keeps on. Now, how in hunder can I ever be a captain with all you beauties around ready to pick the plums? No matter what I wear, I can't look the part. Why, I buy $7 shirts and Knox hats and puttees better'n the captain's own, and that trench coat of mine cost more'n double all the rest of them. But any one of you can put your clothes on wrong side out and look better than I do. This is a h—— of a place for me, this is!"

And Puff pulled distractedly at his tiny well-trained mustache as if thereby to add inches to his height.

"Oh, cheer up, Puffy," said Harlan comfortingly. "You're a peach of a soldier, and don't think all of the big monky-monks in the American Army are Goliaths. Why, there is Gordon and Smith and Milliron, not one of whom would come up to your shoulder," lied Harlan, "and they range from brigadier general up."

Puff looked a bit happier. "Well, of course, that may be true. But what if I only go home a lieutenant, or a second lieutenant, great guns, she wouldn't let me in her back door!"

"Then we'll have to see that you get a captaincy, Puff. That's all there is to it. There's two months yet, and something's sure to turn up. Work hard and study. That's in your line. A lawyer ought to be able to read up on the book stuff like a kid eats candy. Keep a stiff upper lip, and pretend you think you are 7 feet high. You'll come out all right. I'm likely to be top sergeant for a while now, and I'll break you in all I can and give you things to do so you can show the others what you're worth."

Time went on, but Puff didn't. He was a good enough soldier, but alas, lacked that quality that men instinctively obey. Harlan knew that his record card was up on most things, but on "personal qualifications," that indescribable something which counted most of all, he was far short.

Harlan worried. He thought of the Sunday morning he had detailed Puff to get the men up for 6 o'clock breakfast, and Puff had come in breathless and indignant a few minutes later. "They won't move for me," he cried. "You'll have to come and do it!"

So Harlan had gone. He knew the training officers knew all these things. He was afraid Puff would be sent home, and that would have been the end of the girl and Puff's happiness forever.

Puff Had Cleared the Fence and Was Tearing Across the Field Waving His Arms.

But there was one hope. As I said before, Puff was as game as a woodcock. He wasn't afraid of anything, and surely that is some asset for a soldier. Harlan wished he could show it in some way. But would the opportunity present itself? It did.

They had been all week in the trenches, digging, sleeping and fighting (sham battles, of course) in a lake of mud. Now it was Saturday and they had returned to barracks, bathed, changed and were off to town for a two days' layoff. It was good to be free again.

The road to the car lay between fields bereft of summer crops; in places the ground had been plowed and harrowed for the winter wheat and the leaves on the trees were turning and thinning; every wind brought a vari-colored shower to earth. In the center of the meadow stood an apple tree laden with bright rich fruit ready to be picked, and this tree was to be the setting of a scene with little Puff as star performer.

Suddenly there was a scream, and a boy of or 7, who had been picking apples off the ground under the tree, started for the fence, followed by a bull, foaming and roaring and covering the ground at a furious rate.

"Heavens! look there!" cried Harlan, turning his gaze from an automobile coming toward them. He was about to call Puff's attention to it, as it was a Marlan and belonged to Captain Ingraham, the senior instructor.

Puff hadn't seen it, nor was he likely to now. He had seen the peril of the little boy and started for the fence without hesitation.

Harlan's wits worked fast. As top sergeant he was entitled to wear side arms, and now he reached instinctively for his pistol. But here was an opportunity not to be lost. The senior officer for an audience, a scene all set for action and an opportunity for Puff to show what sterling stuff he had in him. Harlan dropped his hand.

The bull was fast gaining, and the boy, seeing he could never make the fence, had doubled back to the tree.

But Puff, without a word, had cleared the fence with one jump and was tearing for dear life across the field, yelling and waving his arms to divert the bull's attention.

It was done very quickly. Puff picked up the boy and almost threw him up into the lowest crooked branch, where he hung on for dear life; but he had no time to get up himself. Then he turned and faced the oncoming bull calmly and squarely, stepping behind the tree just in time to escape the shock which followed.

But it couldn't last long. The bull, now mad with fury, was stamping and goring, and Puff was getting too tired to keep continually out of his way. Then Harlan fired and the animal rolled over.

Now, Harlan expected the senior officer to come up with congratulations, but instead a girl got out of the Marlin car.

"Harry! Harry!" she called frantically "I saw it all, and it was the bravest thing anybody ever did."

Puff opened his arms and she went straight into them. "I don't care if you never get a commission, Harry," she declared. "I know you're brave and I love you."

Harlan smiled. The grandstand play had been made to the wrong audience But, after all, was it?

A Quiet Little Game Among Friends

MRS. GIHILLIS—"Oh, I'm so glad you people dropped in! Now we can have a game of auction. Hal and I have been just dying to play, haven't we, Hal?"

Gihillis—"Yes, that will be great! But, for Pete's sake, if you two girls chatter the way you did the last time there's no use——"

Mrs. Covey—"Mercy me, how you talk, Mr. Gihillis! Why, we never said a word!"

Covey (with terrible sarcasm)—"No, not a whimper! Only don't do it again. I'm likely to go crazy and smash something! Cut for deal!"

Mrs. Gihillis—"Oh, I always forget cutting and I've got them half dealt. What's the use of——"

Gihillis—"If we are going to play we'll play right! Mrs. Covey gets the deal."

Mrs. Covey—"Oh, all right! Grace, if you go downtown tomorrow be sure to stop in at Meadows' and look at the French embroidered——"

Covey—"There you go! You gave Gihillis two cards then—no, you took back the wrong one. Oh, shuffle and deal over!"

Mrs. Covey—"I don't see any sense in being so fussy! It is terrible! Men are perfectly silly!"

Mrs. Gihillis—"Oh, I was there today and got the loveliest petticoat for $3. Just as good as the ones that that Simpkins woman boasted so over bringing from Paris——"

Gihillis—"Grace, it's your lead, please!"

Mrs. Gihillis—"Oh, that's so! Goodness, no; I don't want to lead that. Hearts are trumps, aren't they?"

Gihillis (coldly)—"It's a no trumper. If you'd pay attention——"

Covey—"Partner, if only you'd lead the suit I bid on——"

Mrs. Gihillis—"Why, wasn't it hearts? I'm sure you said hearts—why, she's taking all the tricks!"

Covey (with noble restraint)—"If you'd led clubs, my bid, we'd have cleared five tricks on 'em!"

Mrs. Gihillis—"That's a perfect shame! Hal, it's all your fault, scolding me and mixing me up! Sometimes I think I'll never play cards again with you. It's just like dancing, Isabel!"

Mrs. Covey (sympathetically)—"Isn't it! You never in the world can get along with your own husband! I believe all the trouble in the Massey family, the divorce and everything, came from their quarrels in the dancing class——"

Covey—"Isabel, it's your lead."

Mrs. Covey—"Why, no. Mr. Gihillis made the trump. You're first!"

Covey—"Certainly not! I took it away from him on three lilies! Wake up!"

Mrs. Covey—"If you're going to talk that way I simply won't play! There!"

Gihillis (thru his teeth)—"Whatever did you play that for? It's his suit—and he gets nine tricks by it!"

Mrs. Covey—"Oh, you men are horrid! Because you know all the fine points you expect us to!"

Mrs. Gihillis—"I should say they did! And we play just as good a game as they do——"

Gihillis—"Your lead, Grace!"

Mrs. Gihillis—"Oh, is it my lead? What's trumps? Isabel! Before I forget it, let me tell you that when you put up your cherries this summer you must——"

Gihillis (in awful tones)—"Your lead, Grace!"

Mrs. Gihillis—"Why, I did play! Oh, didn't I? Well, what's trumps?"

Gihillis—"For heaven's sake——"

Covey (hastily)—"It's diamonds, Mrs. Gihillis!"

Mrs. Gihillis—"Oh, I hate diamonds! I simply never can do a thing when that's trump! Who made it, anyhow?"

Mrs. Covey—"I knew a woman who was a splendid player and she wouldn't play a diamond make any more than a spade make, and——"

Gihillis (in loud and awful tones)—"Covey, if you'll come out on the porch I'd like to tell you something!"

Mrs. Gihillis (as the two men precipitately bolt)—"Now, what on earth do you think of that! It is just because they were afraid we'd beat them!"

Mrs. Covey—"Well, you know we play a lots better game than they do!"

* * *

Half, but Not Enough.

THE orderly officer was asking for complaints. Up sprang a private and stated that he had not got his proper ration of butter. Officers as a rule don't like grumblers, and this particularly orderly was no exception. He pointed to a tiny morsel of butter sticking to the private's boot and said crushingly:

"Of course you haven't got your ration. There's half your butter sticking on your boot."

"Correct, sir," admitted the private, looking down; "just half."

* * *

What More Could He Expect?

THE Englishman on the platform was deploring the fact that Great Britain had to import timber for war purposes.

"It's my belief, and I venture to assert it," he yelled, raising his voice, "there isn't a man in this audience who has ever done anything to prevent the destruction of our forests!"

A rather timid looking man quietly arose in the rear of the hall and said:

"Pardon me, I've shot woodpeckers."

The Thirteenth Opal.

(Continued From Page 13.)

"He was here half an hour ago."

Limantour smiled at the astonishment in the face of his caller; he continued by way of explanation: "It is probable that Nunez, in some way, knew of your first visit here to see me. Naturally, he presumed it was a business call and possibly had something to do with my mine. Today he called, so he said, to warn me against having anything to do with you."

"Kind of him, wasn't it?"

"He told me that he had been the means of proving to his present employers that you were stealing from the stock——"

"The low-down villain!"

"And that you were an all 'round good-for-nothing, as evidenced by a brutal attack made by you upon a cousin of his last night at a booth near the Alameda!"

Despite his indignation, Fellows was forced to smile at the very absurdity of the charge. "And you, Senor Limantour," he said, "do you believe all this fellow told you?"

The Mexican leisurely lighted a cigarette before replying; then he answered: "I do not like Antonio Nunez; something about him repels me and fills me with disgust. On the other hand, I have an admiration for you—I regard you as honest and capable. Tell me, please, just what occurred last night in the Alameda."

Fellows began in straightforward manner, giving every detail of the rumpus in the booth, making himself out in no way a hero, but giving the plain facts, and dwelling particularly upon the sad fate of little Yo Tambien, and his own longing and determination to find the child again, to get him away from his brutal tormenters. Limantour followed the recital with fervid interest and attention. When Fellows finished, his host reached over and clasped his hand. "I have heard both stories, senor," he said, "and they are very dissimilar. One story is a lot of lies; the other, the plain truth. When I give you my hand, senor, you are able to determine which one of you I believe and trust!"

"I thank you for that confidence."

"I can do more than express my confidence; I believe I can help you locate the venders——"

"And Yo Tambien?"

"Yes, senor."

"How? What have you learned?"

"Nunez inadvertently let slip something which you may be able to use."

"Then his call will result in good instead of evil."

"I hope so."

"What did you learn?"

"That the Indians who have the boy have received word that a large reward had been offered for his return. They have heard that much, but are not able to find the exact location of the one who offered the reward. They believe it a bona fide offer from a man somewhere in the State of——"

"Of Guadalajara?"

"No, senor; Nunez let slip the information that the venders departed for the State of Queretaro!"

Fellows did not reply at once, but it

A Pair of Malignant, Ferret-like Eyes Were Fastened Upon Him.

was obvious what was passing thru his mind: That a certain earlier proposition was to have, without further discussion, an immediate and definite answer. Limantour leaned back, surveying him with satisfied complacency.

"When does the first train leave for Queretaro?" Fellows asked suddenly.

"At two this afternoon. Will you meet me at the train?"

The American gripped the hand of his host. "I'll be right there—Johnny-on-the-spot—at two o'clock!" he answered.

CHAPTER IX.

IN QUERETARO.

QUERETARO, capital of the State bearing the same name, lies in a long, fertile valley, and is divided by the waters of the Queretaro River which runs thru it. The town is a reliquary of Mexican history. Here the plans of national independence were formed, and here the Archduke Maximilian was shot June 19, 1867.

If one has absolutely nothing to do, Queretaro is the place in which to do it. If he suffers from the constitutional disease of being born tired, here is the place for him to rest. The grass grows in the middle of the streets; at every corner there is a small open square full of trees; under each tree a bench; on every bench a wayfarer; they are all resting. If you pause to interview one of these idle dreamers as to his especial occupation, he will revive long enough to search among the recesses of his wardrobe and fish out various little wads. When he unwinds the skein of dirty thread which binds one, he will spill out into his swarthy palm a thimbleful of inferior opals.

One wonders where all these opalescent seed pearls come from, unless one knows that each of these weary dealers has an especial, private hole in the ground somewhere which he visits at night; hence his wads, his weariness, and his day-time loaf.

Failing to interest you in his wares, the vender suggests that he escort you to the spot where the ill-fated Archduke was shot. If you pass up this proffered opportunity as well, the merchant shrugs his shoulders, and with an expression of patient resignation relapses again into his former state of innocuous somnolence.

When Stanley Fellows, accompanied by his employer, stepped from the train, he was enveloped in a whirling cloud of dust thru which the roof of the station, a long plank walk and a string of cabs were dimly outlined. It was a dry storm, common to the season and section. From out the cloud the American beheld a swarm of venders swooping down upon him; then, seeing that he was in the company of Senor Limantour, owner of the Sangremal, they hung back without offering their wares.

Noting Fellows' discomfiture in the dust, Limantour remarked: "This will be over in a moment, senor." Even as he spoke the sun sifted thru, the blue sky appeared faintly overhead, and little whirls of funnel-shaped dust went creeping down the track to plague those below.

"The town is a mile distant," observed Limantour. "For the present, I think you had better stop at the Gran Hotel which faces the Jardin Zenea; we will take a tram-car."

As they passed along, finally, thru the upper portion of the town toward the Plazuela de la Cruz, Fellows noted that it was clean and well drained; that many of the houses were very old, quaint relics of Colonial days, with half-obliterated escutcheons above the doorways. While not as progressive as many Mexican towns, it possessed a certain distinct quaintness which made it attractive.

They reached the hotel, engaged quarters, then set out at once in a spring wagon for the mine. It was Limantour's intention to return to Mexico City late that same afternoon, but he wished to see his new manager thoroly conversant with his new duties and surroundings before leaving.

The Sangremal was formerly a portion of a large estate just on the edge of the town. Upon arriving at the mine, Fellows' first view was of a rich deposit of opalescent stone which lay uncovered to the bright sunshine—a beautiful ledge glittering with myriad rays of colored light. Peons were at work, blasting out sections of the hard rock with dynamite.

As they went on past the glittering streak Limantour observed: "While that rich vein is near the surface, it is a much more difficult task to get at the larger portion of my holdings." They came to a shaft of apparently great depth. "Down there," the owner continued, "the matrix is being drilled out with steel augers." Fellows beheld a steady line of peons climbing up from the shaft, each with a sack across his back containing the gem-bearing stone. This they dumped upon a crude platform, later to be broken into small pieces with hammers, and the gems sent to Limantour's gem cutters to be polished on grindstones of varying degrees of fineness. The matrix from this shaft was different from that first encountered in the ledge near the surface, being of a grayish-red shade, and bearing the finest grade of fire opal—a beautiful stone displaying emerald tints upon a basic color of fiery red, often flashing a fine flame from a rich crimson center.

He took Fellows to all parts of the workings, explained every detail of getting out the gems, then called the Mexican foreman, temporarily in charge, and explained that the American was to take over the management of the mine at

(Continued on Page 27.)

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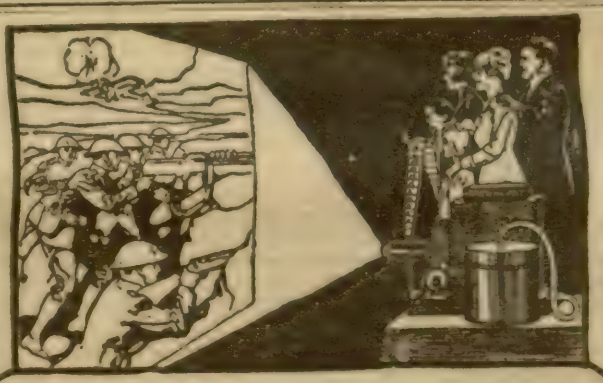

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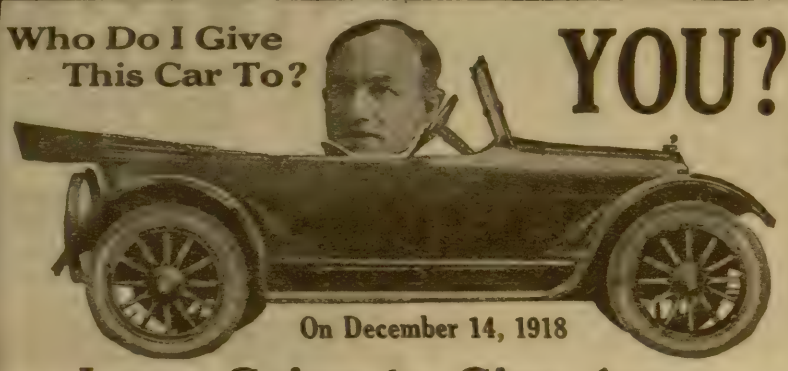

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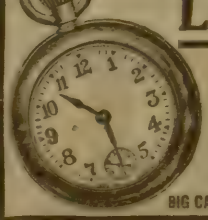

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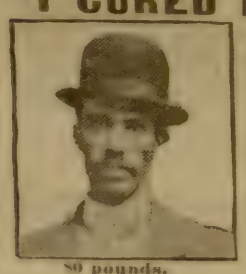

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Beaded Bag to Match Your Fall Suit

BY ELIZABETH BERNE.

BAGS made of solid beads on a canvas background are very attractive, but very expensive in both cost and time consumed in the making. This practical shopping or dressy bag is a very creditable substitute and can be made at home by the handy girl at very little cost in dollars and cents and also in labor. Then, again, she can use her own ingenuity and choice in making a bag entirely different from any she could purchase already designed. The foundation for this bag is navy blue satin, or any other shade to match one's fall tailored suit may be used. The material required is a piece of goods, 14 inches by 18 inches. This should be folded to measure 9 inches in width by 14 inches in length. Shape a little at the sides to form a point at the base, shirring in the remaining fullness at the very point.

Just above the point, applique a beaded dress ornament; this should consist of beads of various sizes and colors. To combine well with the navy blue background, this ornament is comprised of three sizes in tan, garnet, dull green, black jet and dull finished and steel beads, and the effect is dainty and charming. Above this ornament are single steel beads not formed into any special design, but scattered over a depth of about two inches.

At the upper edge turn the material back for two inches, along the upper edge sew steel beads in clusters of three beads at even spaces apart. Line the bag with either light or dark lining silk. This will afford an opportunity for using a remnant one may have about the house. In searching for this you might find an old beaded purse, waist or hat, which has been discarded for so many seasons that you had almost forgotten its existence.

Good beads are always an economical investment, for they can be used whenever they come back in style, and the beauty of them is that they are better quality than those purchased today at a much advanced price. As the dress ornaments are not so popular as in former seasons, they can be bought at a reduction, which is unusual in these war times.

The four-inch long beaded tassel is of jet beads, as is also the knob which fits up close to the base of the bag. A yard

and a quarter of No. 7 gros grain ribbon, or the color to match, forms the draw strings. An oval mirror backed to match the lining is sewed to the beading on the inside. A small bag containing the powder puff is also a handy addition to this bag.

Taffeta silk or velvet can be substituted for the satin material, making an all-round fancy bag to carry with any suit or coat.

Girls' New Frocks.

WASH clothes are frequently worn by the children much later in the season than by their elders, and here is a very clever pointer on how to obtain some beautiful and unusual frocks very reasonably.

Smocks which have been worn during summer by mother or big sister are usually quite long enough for the ten-year-old girl. The sleeves, neck and shoulders will have to be made smaller. One mother bought several new smocks at reduction for her little girl of eleven, and they were the admiration of every one who saw them. A pink and white flecked silk one was embroidered in apple green and blue floss, and with the belt raised a more stunning little frock would be hard to find. The smock of dark blue with red smocking and a huge white collar made a play dress of unusually smart lines.

It hardly seems possible that these grownup smocks could be made to fit a child with so little trouble, but if tried it is easy to be convinced. The materials are usually so different from the ones we are accustomed to that the unusualness of them is quite charming. Frequently the embroidery is more graceful than could otherwise be obtained and colors which would not be thought of otherwise will prove suitable and very attractive.

Latest Fashion Frills.

BELTS, girdles and sashes are all in use, but the exact placing is still unsettled. Both the slightly low and high waist line are shown.

Tailored suits by Paquin are of plaid velours de laine, composed of grays, blues and beige, which sounds rather dull.

In contrast to the above some bizarre evening gowns are described. Red satin with blue tulle and a girdle of blue velvet is the interesting form one of these frocks takes and, strangely, it is designed for the young girl. Mauve taffeta is the foundation of another one with silver galloon, and large motifs of silver at the sides are bordered with monkey fur in white.

Short jackets are lengthened by fringes of monkey fur or wide bands of short-haired peltry.

Fashion Brevities.

SMOCKS have Eton collars.
Bluebirds are the latest.
The newest suits are beltless.
Skirts taper toward the feet.
Hats are shaped helmet style.
White yarn appears on blouses.
Strap slippers are popular.
Voile is the chief rival of organdie.
Every jacket now has its waistcoat.
Narrow belts that cross are still good.

Sewing Tips.

NOW it is snap fasteners that are "going up." One has become used to paying 10 and 11 cents for spools of sewing silk, 6 cents instead of 5 for machine cotton and basting thread and a bit extra for belting tape and other necessities of the work basket. The acuteness of labor conditions is the familiar reason given for the advanced price on snap fasteners, and it is darkly hinted that because of the increased cost of paper and cardboard snap fasteners may hereafter be sold loose in envelopes and one will have to fumble for them instead of picking them conveniently from a card. If all these things, however, are helping to win the war womankind will not complain, and after all the extra pennies on sewing materials and the inconvenience of a little extra labor to the home dressmaker are minor trials which one must take good temperedly in these days when everybody is doing her best to keep sunny and to help.

Money is saved by tucks and all other forms of self-trimming except where they make too great a demand on human labor.

If you place something white near the under side of a needle's eye you can thread it more easily; also cut the thread on the slant instead of straight across.

Opaque Skirt "Dimmer."

IN SPITE of the revived interest in calico frocks and the swinging away from transparentness in summer frocks, there is still a demand for the contrivance that will render the petticoat not transparent when the frock skirt is of a diaphanous texture.

Last year pique skirts finished only with a neatly scalloped ruffle were worn with transparent frocks, sometimes beneath the beruffled lace-trimmed underskirt.

Now what is called a "dimmer" has been put on the market. It consists of two panels arranged on light elastics so that it will stay in place at waist and hips and extend downward just far enough to give the desired opaqueness, without adding to the bulk of the lingerie.

Coat Collars.

THE big collar is coming—that is, the very big, high, wide collar on the coat. It hugs up around the throat and it lies soft and close along the shoulders. Of course, it can be rolled back so that the throat is uncovered, if desired.

Suits Have Vests.

MANY of the new fall suits have a high necked vest of the same cloth as the suit with fur collar Others have these vests in contrasting color.

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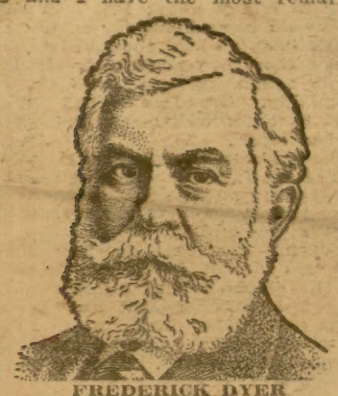

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Your Kitchen in War Time

The Place of Eggs in the Diet

BY MARY FULLER WEST.

BECAUSE of their great food value, their relative freedom from waste and the ease with which they are prepared, eggs make an excellent substitute for meats and fish which day by day are becoming more expensive.

Of course, the season is approaching when it will be harder to get eggs, since the hens are not laying as frequently, and the prices for them in town will be mounting steadily as the supply decreases. Yet, in spite of higher prices, eggs are a cheaper form of food than meat or fish. When you take into consideration that 97 per cent of the portion eaten is digested—a high proportion when compared with other foods—you can easily understand why eggs form a cheaper item of diet than do these other foods on your table.

And this is not all. Of course eggs contain the same kind of nourishment as meat, and also have a number of valuable mineral elements in an easily digestible form. They are quickly prepared, and therefore save fuel and labor in their preparation when compared with other foods. Still another advantage lies in the fact that while eggs contain the same elements as meat, they do not contain substances that are convertible into dangerous uric acid in the body.

However wholesome eggs may be when fresh and clean, they may be decidedly unwholesome when old and dirty. If you use eggs be sure they are clean and fresh. If you own hens, keep the nests clean and take out the eggs frequently.

For the thrifty housekeeper who wants to put eggs away for the winter months when the hens lay infrequently, there are ways of preserving the eggs at home. Pack them in a solution of water-glass or lime water, or cover them with paraffin or varnish. Eggs can be kept for months when treated this way. Altogether, a little forethought now will help you to save money when the colder months come around.

Household Hints.

HERE is a dish that has as much building material as one and a quarter pounds of solid meat and it tastes fine. Boil two cups of rice. Mix it with two cupfuls of tomatoes, half a pound of grated cheese and one tablespoonful of salt. Pour it into a baking dish and bake half an hour. Onions may be used as a flavoring, or if desired some peppers or celery can be cut up and boiled with the rice.

In case you suffer a sprain bathe it with vinegar and water, using one part of vinegar to three of water. Bathing constantly with salt and cold water is an excellent first aid treatment.

If the skirt or coat you are pressing has a gloss from wear, dilute one tablespoonful vinegar with one quart of water and dampen the pressing cloth in this. Iron as usual, using a hot iron, and the gloss will disappear.

For the wartime pies see how you like a crust made as follows: Sift together one cup barley flour, half a cup of rice flour and one teaspoonful of salt. With a knife work in six tablespoonfuls of fat. Add sufficient cold water and roll dough out three times.

To extract onion juice use the glass lemon squeezer and press onion over it. It will save time and prevent the smarting of the eyes.

Drain pipes will not clog so readily if you lay a piece of newspaper over the sink strainer when you pour greasy liquid into the sink.

When cooking fruit add a little salt. You will not have to use as much sugar, and the flavor of the fruit will be improved.

Potato Patties.

SELECT medium-sized, smooth-skinned oval potatoes. Bake in a moderately hot oven until tender, being careful not to overbrown the skin. Cut the potatoes in two, lengthwise, remove the potato pulp, being careful to leave the shells unbroken. Mash the hot potato, add either milk or cream to moisten as for mashed potato, one-half saltspoon salt and one-eighth saltspoon pepper. Fill the shells with this mixture, rounding the surface so that it is the shape of the original potato. Bake for ten minutes in a hot oven.

Variations—Fold into the two cups of seasoned potato pulp, the beaten white of an egg; pile lightly in the potato shells and bake. Grated cheese, one-half cupful to two cups of potato pulp may be used.

Orange Omelet.

FOUR eggs, four tablespoons powdered sugar, two oranges, half teaspoon salt, two tablespoons butter, two tablespoons orange juice, quarter teaspoon baking powder. Separate yolks from whites, add salt to yolks and beat until thick and lemon colored. Beat whites until stiff and add yolks, making powder and orange juice. Sprinkle powdered sugar on oranges, which have been sliced lengthwise. Put butter in hot frying pan and pour in omelet mixture. When it has thickened well and is puffed up add the thin slices of one orange. Fold the omelet in half over the oranges. When done place on hot plate with the remaining slices of the orange around it.

Vegetable Turkey

ONE cup rolled corn meal crumbs, one cup sweet milk, one tablespoon vegetable fat, half teaspoon powdered sage, one egg, one cup walnut meats, salt and pepper to season. Mix the cracker crumbs, milk, fat, sage and seasoning. Beat the eggs, add the chopped nuts, and mix with the other ingredients. Bake for twenty minutes in a hot oven. Serve with brown gravy.

French Peach Pies.

A FRENCH peach pie is delicious. Line a pie plate with pie crust, as usual. Lay quarters of peaches in the paste, around and around. Place them evenly and closely in the pan so that no one piece is on top of the other. Break ten peach stones and arrange them evenly on top of the quarter pieces of peaches. Have ready sirup, made by boiling a cup of honey with two tablespoonfuls water till it threads. Pour this sirup over the peaches and lastly put a few narrow strips of pie crust across the pie, four each way, and bake. Perhaps you may want to call this peach tart instead of peach pie, but on eating it you will declare it is the best peach pie you ever tasted.

Sheppard Pies.

CUT the leftover portion from a roast into small pieces. Place in a saucepan and add sufficient boiling water to cover. One-half cupful of finely minced onions, two carrots, cut in dice, one teaspoonful of celery leaves. Cook very slowly for three-quarters of an hour. Thicken the gravy slightly with cornstarch and season with salt and pepper. Pour into a casserole dish and cover with a crust made of mashed and well-seasoned potatoes. Bake in a hot oven for thirty-five minutes.

Potato Puffs.

USE two cups of mashed potatoes, two eggs, one cup grated cheese, one-half cup milk, one teaspoon salt. Add the milk to the potato and beat until thoroly blended. Add the beaten egg and salt, gradually adding the grated cheese. Bake in greased tins or ramekins in a slow oven.

Potato Sausages.

TWO cupfuls of mashed potatoes, one teaspoonful of salt, one-half teaspoonful of paprika, one large onion, minced fine. Mix thoroly and mold into sausages. Shape and then roll in corn flour. Fry until golden brown in smoking hot fat.

Banana Meringue.

PEEL and mash fine one banana. Carefully fold into a fruit whip made of white of one egg, one-half glassful of grape jelly. Pile high on thinly sliced bananas.

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A Page for the Ledger Boys and Girls

The Ugly Maiden Who Became Beautiful

ON THE borders of a dense forest there lived a mother and her two daughters. One of these daughters was very pretty, but the other was so ugly that people would mock and laugh at her. Even her mother and sister were ashamed of her and would drive her from the room if there were company.

One day the mother was going to give a great feast, and had invited all of her rich friends.

"Now, Lisette," she said to the ugly daughter, "run along to the forest and play like a good girl, for I don't wish my friends to see how very ugly you are."

Her mother packed her a lunch and said good-by.

Sorrowfully Lisette took the lunch and went to the forest, and when she got there, threw herself on the ground and wept.

Sobbing aloud in her grief, she said, "Oh, if I could only be like other girls, wouldn't I be happy!"

At this she heard a noise and, looking up, she saw a beautiful white horse. He was kneeling down as tho he wanted Lisette to mount him. She did so, and galloped off at once.

Nero (which was the horse's name) took her straight to fairyland.

Going to the queen's palace, where he lived, instead of taking Lisette to the throne room, he trotted around to the kitchen where the maids were.

As soon as they saw her they laughed and made fun of her appearance.

They asked her what she was doing there, and she told them she wanted to be beautiful.

"You will have to go to the queen, but as to becoming beautiful, that is impossible."

They led her to the queen, who pitied her as soon as she saw her ugly face.

"If you do as I tell you I may be able to make you pretty," said Rosebud, the queen.

She rang a silver bell and a maid entered.

"Bring me my wand," she commanded.

The maid reentered carrying the magic wand, which the queen took, and touching Lisette with it, uttered some magic words.

"Now go out in the garden," she said, "and bathe in the lake, and when you come back I will give you some different garments to wear."

Lisette did as she was told and bathed in the lake, and when she returned Rosebud had some beautiful fresh clothes for her to wear.

"Now," said the queen, "take these pills after each meal. But they will make you very sick if you do not repeat these magic words:

" 'Hi si rum ritty, I command this pill to make me pretty.' "

Lisette thanked her, and then Nero carried her back to the forest where he had found her.

When she reached home it was dark and her mother scolded her for staying in the forest so long and locked her in her room for a whole day, giving her nothing but bread and milk to eat.

She had her pills, tho, and after every meal she took one.

The next day she was not quite as ugly and each day she became prettier, till at last her mother and sister began to notice it.

One day Helen, her sister, went to Lisette's room and, finding the pills, took one. Not knowing the magic words, she became very ill.

When Helen told her mother that Lisette had the pills that made her sick, she immediately destroyed them.

That night Lisette cried herself to sleep, but the next day she decided to go to Rosebud and get some more.

She went to the forest, hoping to find Nero, who after a while came prancing along.

She mounted him and he took her to Rosebud.

Lisette told her how the pills had been lost, but the queen said, "I am very sorry, but I have no more, but if you go to the enchanted castle you may be able to get some."

Lisette mounted Nero and they were soon at the castle.

It was made entirely of stone and Nero led the way thru the rooms until they reached one in which there was a golden box on the table.

Lisette opened it and to her great delight found a box of pills.

Happening to look at Nero she was surprised to find tears in his eyes.

"Why, Nero, what's the matter?" she said, but he merely looked ashamed and answered, "Nothing."

She was scolded again upon arriving home so late.

By the time she had taken all the pills she had become quite beautiful.

Nero and Lisette had become great friends by this time, for every day he would take her for a ride.

One day as they passed a big rock Nero said, "Take the sword that is under that rock and thrust it into my heart."

"Oh, Nero, I couldn't do that!" exclaimed Lisette, horrified, but every time they would pass that rock he would say the same thing.

"You Must Be My Bride and We Will Return to the Castle."

At last Lisette, who could not stand seeing Nero unhappy, sorrowfully brought the sword and thrust it into his heart.

As he sank to the ground a handsome prince sprang up in his place.

Lisette was as much frightened as she was astonished, but he comforted her by saying that he had been enchanted by a wicked fairy, but, now that she had broken the spell, he was free.

"My name is not Nero, but Espagnol," said the prince. "You must be my bride, and we will return to the stone castle, which is now golden, since you have broken the enchantment."

They were soon married, and Lisette gave her mother and sister many presents of jewels and fine clothes.

As long as Helen and her mother lived they regretted that they had treated Lisette unkindly when she was ugly.

The Quarrelsome Children

DID you ever hear of a sister and brother quarreling with each other so often and so much that they grew to believe they didn't really love one another at all?

Carrie and Billy were like that. Morning, noon and night found them on bad terms. They didn't behave at all as brother and sister should. Their "fights" were foolish to listen to and they sounded something like this:

"Sister, what did you do with my ball?"

"I haven't seen your old ball!"

"Yes, you have, mean-ee, you've hid it on purpose. Now, you give it to me."

"Like to see you make me, if I did have it. And I wouldn't tell you if I did."

"I'll show you how I can make you leave my things alone!" Usually at such an outburst grandmother would come along and try to make peace. Carrie would whimper that Billy "hurt her feelings," and Billy would say that Carrie "picked a fight" whenever she had a chance. Somehow, however, the "scrap" was always patched up for the present and things went well until the next time.

"I'm Awful Sorry We've Had So Many Fights."

Carrie's and Billy's mother was dead and their father traveled on business the year round. He left his children with their grandmother because he knew that she would love them. He didn't expect her to spoil them as she did.

And the dear old lady herself was beginning to worry about it. Soon their father would come home for a visit and she could imagine how shocked he would be to see them in one of their tempers. Certainly something must be done, and done quickly. Grandma sighed as she thought that her well-meant indulgence had a bad effect.

As she sat knitting in her rocking chair she heard the familiar voices of the children, raised in anger at each other. She arose and went softly to the room where they were "squabbling."

"Children," she said in firm tones, "cease this dreadful fussing." Astonished, the children shut up like clams. Usually grandma pleaded and begged them to be "quiet" and "nice." They didn't exactly know what to say to this new form of reproach. Then grandma spoke again:

"Your father is coming next week. He has a surprise for you, but if he ever hears you speak to one another as I have heard you, he will never let you know what the surprise is! and I can tell you the surprise is a mighty fine one."

"What is it?" asked both children at once.

"Dear children," said grandma, in her old loving voice, "I cannot tell you, but you must really try to be good in the future to deserve the surprise."

Grandma was very solemn. The children were awed. They looked at one another shamefacedly. Then they ran off to lunch with more good grace than they had displayed for many weeks.

When the morning of the great arrival came, grandmother took Carrie and Billy to the depot. The fussy old train pulled into the station, crowds of people came thru the gates, and it was with difficulty that they recognized their father. They saw him at a distance and before he reached them they were able to see that he had a little boy with him.

"Who's that?" asked Carrie, in a whisper to Billy.

"I dunno," he replied.

"Soon after they were in their father's arms. After grandma had been fondly embraced, father put his arm around the shoulder of the little stranger and said: "Children, here is a new friend for you. This little boy is French; his name is Francois. And I want you to be very nice to him. This will be quite hard, for he doesn't understand English; but if you treat him kindly, he will be happy and know that he is with friends."

After they arrived home father took the children on his lap and told them a story. "You've heard about the war, haven't you, dears? I have just come from France, where the war is going on, and I chanced to be in one of the small towns that was destroyed by the Germans. I found little Francois being carried to an ambulance by a French soldier, and I stopped to ask where he was being taken.

"Then the soldier told me the sad news that the little chap's father and mother were killed when the town was shelled and that he was left all alone in the world. He is what people call a war orphan.

"I thought of you two, my dead little children, and how your loving kindness might make this little fellow happy once more; so I asked permission to bring him to America with me. I have adopted him now, and hereafter he will be your little brother. I hope you will treat him as kindly as you do each other, for he has lived thru the fearful war and has had enough trouble in his little life to make even a grown-up miserable for all time. Will you promise to always be kind to him?"

The children nodded their heads; their eyes were full of tears; they couldn't speak. They were ashamed of themselves and sorry for the little French chap; and they didn't know which feeling hurt most.

"Now we will go into the other room and begin Francois' first lesson in English," said father.

Carrie and Billy clasped hands and followed him.

"Say, Billy," whispered Carrie, "I'm awful sorry we've had so many 'fights;' but we will never have any more, will we?"

"No!" answered Billy. "Gee, I'm glad that father dont know how bad we've been, or we might not have had Francois with us."

"No-o," mused Carrie. Then she smiled and gave her brother a loud kiss on his ear—the first one for months, but the beginning of many others to both him and their little comrade, Francois.

* * *

Classified.

Salome—"It's a horrible mushy story."
Marie—"Well, isn't it a serial?"

The Thirteenth Opal.

(Contined From Page 23.)

once; that he should be respected and obeyed accordingly.

They returned to the hotel and partook of a light dinner, then Limantour boarded a train for home again, with the parting injunction: "You will report to me by letter each day, senor, and I'll run out to see you from time to time. You'll get along famously as manager, of that I am assured; but bear in mind, please, that the main reason I brought you to Queretaro is to solve the mystery of where those especially fine opals come from. Can you do that, senor?"

"Leave it to me!" the newly installed manager responded, cheerily; and, taking him at his word, the owner of the Sangremal swung aboard.

Fellows returned to the plaza, or Jardin Zenea. There the air was delicious and balmy, and the fountains under the trees cool and refreshing. He took a seat upon a bench nearest the street, from which he could get a good view of the houses along its length. He noticed now that the barred shutters, closed all day, were bowed open, and that one passing along in front could catch the tinkle of guitars, the cadence of soft voices, and the plaintive minor of the love-songs of old Castile. Later, the dark-eyed beauties began coming out upon the balconies, and the doors of these apparently uninhabited houses were thrown wide open, displaying the exquisite gardens blooming in the patios.

A band began playing in the plaza.

The pretty senoritas came down from the balconies, and in groups of three or four began strolling languidly along the winding paths.

Soothed by the tranquillity and picturesque setting, by the lilt of the music, and an occasional coquettish glance and smile of some passing senorita, Stanley Fellows leaned back comfortably upon the bench, forgetting all his recent troubles and sorrows; forgetting for the time Simon Smock, Antonio Nunez, even little Yo Tambien.

And yet, at that very moment, a pair of malignant, ferret-like eyes were fastened upon him—the eyes of a man standing concealed back in the foliage, whose swarthy countenance showed not only bitter hate, but determination to reap revenge.

The thirteenth opal still remains a mystery. Yo Tambien also, it seems, has disappeared off the face of the earth. Yet Fellows does not give up. How he finds Yo Tambien, and undergoes torture, how the boy finally releases him and shows him the way to the solution of the opal mystery are all thrillingly told in the final installment of the Thirteenth Opal.

* * *

His Soapless Day.

"My friend, there is really no excuse for you not looking neat and clean."

"Sorry, mister, but I'm conserving my bit along wit' de rest o' de folks. You jes' happened to hit me on my soapless day."

Advanced Ireland.

AN IRISHMAN and a Scot were arguing as to the merits of their respective countries.

"Ah, weel," said Sandy, "they tore down an auld castle in Scotland and found many wires under it, which shows that the telegraph was knoon there hoondreds o' years ago."

"Well," said Pat, "they tore down an ould castle in Oireland, and, begorra, there was no wires found undher it, which shows that they knew all about wireless telegraphy in Oireland hundreds av years ago."

* * *

His Hearing Restored.

"WELL," said the doctor to Pat, "did that cure for deafness really help your brother?"

"Arrah, sure enough," said Pat. "He hadn't heard a sound for years, and the day after he took that medicine he heard from a friend in America."

Classified Want Ads

Information— The rate for one insertion in The Saturday Blade and one insertion in Chicago Ledger is 30 cents a word, minimum 14 words, less 3% for cash. Each initial and group of figures is counted as a word, and the name and address are also counted. This is the minimum rate; neither more nor less is charged, irrespective of size or number of insertions. An ad may appear in both publications of the same week, or in the Blade of one week and the Ledger of the next.

W. D. BOYCE CO., Publisher, 500-514 N. Dearborn St., Chicago.

SALESMEN WANTED

SALESMEN—CITY OR TRAVELING. Experience unnecessary. Send for list of openings and full particulars. Prepare in spare time to earn the big salaries—$2,500 to $10,000 a year. Employment service rendered members. Natl. Salesmen's Tr. Ass'n, Dept. 103 M, Chicago, Ill.

AGENTS WANTED

AGENTS, WE NEED MEN AND WOMEN right now to take orders for world's greatest raincoat values. Dandy coat $4.98. Sixty-five fabrics. Dozens of styles. Made to measure and delivered direct from our big factory to your customer. No delivering. Profit in advance. Easy to sell. Cooper making $300 monthly. Glover $61.50 first four days. Nealy 22 orders in two days. Four average orders a day gives you $2,500 a year profit. Full outfit and sample coat given. Write for wonderful offer. Comer Mfg. Co., Dept. B-133, Dayton, Ohio.

BOYS—GIRLS—4 THRIFT STAMPS GIVEN away free for selling our 10c high-grade perfume. "It sells like hot cake," one boy wrote. No money necessary to start. Ask parents' permission to apply for agency in your locality. Print out your name and address plainly. Eckhoff Laboratories No. 1, 2013 Grand Ave. St., Dept. 4108.

AGENTS: 2 IN 1 REVERSIBLE RAINCOAT. Two coats in one. One side a handsome black raincoat, reverse side fine dress coat. Something new. Not sold in stores. Steam vulcanized. Guaranteed water-proof. Big seller. All styles and sizes for men, women and children. Write for agency. Guaranteed Raincoat Co., 1511 North St., Dayton, Ohio.

AGENTS—STEADY INCOME. LARGE MANufacturer of handkerchiefs and dress goods, etc., wishes representatives in each locality. Factory to consumer. Big profits, honest goods. Whole or spare time. Credit given. Send for particulars. Freeport Mfg. Co., 52 Main St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

PATRIOTIC MEN AND WOMEN TO DIStribute "America and the Great War." Gives just the information everyone needs at this critical time. Illustrated. Big pay. Spare time may be used. Outfit free. International Press, Philadelphia.

$60 WEEKLY AND AUTOMOBILE FURnished men everywhere placing samples wonderful new fuel product with automobile owners. 3c worth equals gallon of gasoline. Outfit free. L. Ballwey, 7 Sta. F, Louisville, Ky.

AGENTS! QUICK SALES! BIG PROFITS! Outfit free! Cash or credit. Sales in every home for our beautiful Dress Goods, Silks, Hosiery, Underwear and General Dry Goods. Write today. National Importing & Mfg. Co., Dept. HA, 425 Broadway, New York.

AGENTS: MEN OR WOMEN OF CHARacter and reliability. Experience not essential. No money required. Established 1884. Great Eastern Coffee and Tea Co., Dept. SB918, St. Louis, Missouri.

AGENTS—SELL SOMETHING USEFUL. THE "Business Guide" is a necessity. Miss Bryant sold 400 in July. Profits over $800. Send for free outfit. Nichols Co., Box 18, Naperville, Ill.

AGENTS—A NEW ONE: HARPER'S FIBRE Broom and Ten-Use Brush Set Combined. Saves broom expense; lightens housework; easy seller; first order returnable. Harper Brush Works, Dept. B, Fairfield, Iowa.

$2.95 FOR MEN'S MADE-TO-ORDER pants—worth $6.00. Sample free. Money-making offer for agents, part time or all. Write today. Chicago Tailors' Association, Dept. C 447, 515 So. Franklin St., Chicago.

EVERY RRADER OF THE LEDGER OUGHT to read these ads. Every week splendid chances to make money—to better yourself—to buy, sell or exchange goods or services, are offered here.

$1 AN HOUR EASILY EARNED SELLING Peck's economical household specialties. Write quick. Peck Specialty Co., North Haven, Conn.

WE START YOU WITHOUT A DOLLAR— Soaps, extracts, perfumes, toilet goods. Experience unnecessary. Carnation Co., 26 S. Main, St. Louis.

$10 TO $15 PER DAY HANDLING NEW household articles. Big war time sellers. Outfit free. Territory going fast. Write quick. Dept. W. 56, Duo Co., Attica, N. Y.

AGENTS — I'VE A NEW SOAP GAME that's a dandy. New stuff; 100% profits. Sample and full layout free. Write quick. Lacassian Co., Dept. 21, St. Louis, Mo.

$1.00 PANTS OFFER, MADE TO MEASURE. Write for free samples and styles. Knickerbocker Tailoring Co., Dept. 78, Chicago, Ill.

HELP WANTED

HUNDREDS OF MEN AND WOMEN wanted by Government and business concerns to make mechanical drawings, tracings, etc. Salaries up to $2000 a year. Pleasant work. Permanent positions. I'll give you necessary training in your home in your spare time, furnish drawing outfit free and help you secure position when qualified. Write today for particulars and application blank. Roy C. Claflin, Dept. 762, Columbia School of Drafting, Washington, D. C.

"UNCLE SAM" WANTS THOUSANDS MEN women as clerks at Washington, $100 month. Write for free instructions, "How to Get Appointment." Franklin Institute, Dept. V29, Rochester, N. Y.

EVERY READER OF THE LEDGER OUGHT to read these ads. Every week splendid chances to make money—to better yourself—to buy, sell or exchange goods or services, are offered here.

BECOME DETECTIVES—BIG PAY; EASY work; free particulars. Captain Wagner, 186 East 79th, New York.

MALE HELP WANTED

FIREMEN, BRAKEMEN, BAGGAGEMEN, $140-$200. Colored porters, by railroads everywhere. Experience unnecessary. 686 Ry. Bureau, East St. Louis, Ills.

WANTED—MEN—BECOME CHAUFFEURS. Earn $40 week. Sample lessons free. Franklin Institute, Dept. V 824, Rochester, N. Y.

GOVERNMENT EXAMINATIONS — THORough instruction, $5. Returned if not appointed. Particulars free. American Civil Service School, Washington, D. C.

MEN—AGE 17 TO 45. EXPERIENCE UNnecessary. Travel; make secret investigations, reports. Salaries; expenses. American-Foreign Detective Agency, 126, St. Louis.

BE A DETECTIVE. EXCELLENT OPPORtunity, good pay, travel. Write C. T. Ludwig, 320 Westover Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

FEMALE HELP WANTED

WANTED, TEN BRIGHT, CAPABLE LADIES to travel, demonstrate and sell well known goods to established dealers. $25.00 to $50.00 per week; railroad fare paid; weekly advance for traveling expenses. Address at once, Goodrich Drug Company, Dept. 85, Omaha, Nebr.

AMBITIOUS GIRLS—WOMEN. GET GOVernment jobs. $100 month. Thousands war openings. Easy fall examinations everywhere. Sample questions free. Write immediately. Franklin Institute, Dept. V27, Rochester, N. Y.

WOMEN TO SEW. GOODS SENT PREpaid to your door; plain sewing; steady work; no canvassing. Send stamped envelope for prices paid. Universal Co., Dept. 54, Philadelphia, Pa.

CROCHETERS WANTED, POSITIVELY NO canvassing; stamped envelope for particulars. Mrs. Meixell, 517 Lycoming St., Williamsport, Pa.

REAL ESTATE

A SMALL CALIFORNIA FARM MAKES more money with less work. Live longer, better. Delightful climate. Rich soil. Low prices. Easy terms. Sure profits. Hospitable neighbors. Good roads, schools, churches. Write for our San Joaquin Valley illustrated folders free. C. L. Seagraves, Industrial Commissioner, Santa Fe Ry., 1931 Railway Exchange, Chicago.

FARMS WANTED

WANT TO HEAR FROM OWNER OF farm or unimproved land for sale. O. O. Mattson, St. Paul, Minn.

SHORT STORIES WANTED

WRITERS! — STORIES, POEMS, PLAYS, etc., are wanted for publication. Literary Bureau, B4, Hannibal, Mo.

MOVING PICTURE BUSINESS

BIG PROFITS—SMALL INVESTMENT— Buy complete guaranteed moving picture outfit, machine, films, everything direct from manufacturers. Easy payment plan. No experience needed. Free catalog. Dept. M9, Monarch Film Service, 228 Union Ave., Memphis, Tenn.

LARGE PROFITS DAILY MADE IN THIS business. Openings everywhere. Small capital starts you. Complete outfits sold on installments. No experience needed. Our machines are used and endorsed by Government institutions. Catalog free. Atlas Moving Picture Company, Morton Building, Chicago.

$15.00 TO $20.00 NIGHTLY ON SMALL INvestment. Complete Moving Picture Outfit, Machine, Film, etc., at manufacturers' prices sold on installments. Free catalog. Moving Picture Sales Co., 540 Plymouth Place, Dept. BS, Chicago.

PATENTS

INVENT SOMETHING. YOUR IDEAS MAY bring wealth. Free book tells what to invent and how to obtain a patent. References: Dun, Bradstreet and Washington Mechanics' Bank. Talbert & Talbert, 4276 Talbert Building, Washington, D. C.

PROTECTIVE PATENTS PROCURED promptly. 96 pg. Blue Book free. Trademarks registered. Robb & Robb, 248-252 Southern Building, Washington, D. C.

SONG POEMS WANTED

WHO WILL WRITE THE SONG HIT OF the war? If you have an idea suitable for such a song, write for free booklet, "Songwriters' Manual and Guide." We revise poems, compose music, secure copyright and facilitate free publication or sale. Poems submitted, examined free. Knickerbocker Studios, 112 Gaiety Bldg., N. Y. C.

WRITE A SONG—PATRIOTIC OR POPUlar. I compose music and guarantee publication. Send words today. Thomas Merlin, 219, Reaper Block, Chicago.

MEDICAL

TO SUFFERING MEN AND WOMEN. IF you have lame back, failing memory, loss of ambition, despondency, unfitting you for the ordinary duties of life; or if afflicted with any chronic nervous, blood, kidney or bladder disease. Remember; we are specialists in these diseases. Write; book symptom blank and advice free, sealed. Dr. Meyers, 316 Nicollet Ave., Minneapolis, Minn.

DON'T SUFFER WITH STOMACH TROUble. My tablets relieve instantly. Trial free. Dr. Mayhew, W-1047 Lothrop Ave., Detroit, Mich.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

SILVER PRODUCING MINES MAKING MILlionaires through small investments. Address: Midwest Investment Bureau, Boston Block, Minneapolis, Minn.

MODELS AND MFG.

TO AVOID MISTAKES INVENTORS SHOULD have correct models made before filing for patent. Write Adam Fisher Mfg. Co., 44E, St. Louis, Mo.

TOBACCO HABIT

TOBACCO OR SNUFF HABIT CURED OR no pay. $1.00 if cured. Remedy sent on trial. Superba Co., TC, Baltimore, Md.

GINSENG

GINSENG, PLANT NOW, INSTRUCTIONS free, 100 seeds 25c, 1,000 $1.00. Specialty Farm, Rockford, Minn.

UNDERGROUND TREASURES

UNDERGROUND TREASURES—HOW AND where to find them; particulars for stamp. Model Co., Morton Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

WANTED TO BUY

CASH FOR OLD FALSE TEETH. DON'T matter if broken. We pay up to $35.00 per set, also actual value for diamonds, old gold, silver, platinum and bridge work. Send by parcel post, and receive cash by return mail. Will return your goods if price is unsatisfactory. Mazer's Tooth Specialty, Dept. 64, 2007 S. 5th St., Phila. Pa.

PERSONAL

SUFFERERS FROM NERVOUS, WEAK, run down conditions should take Juven Pills. They accomplish marvelous results. This medicine has more rejuvenating, vitalizing force than has ever before been offered. Sent postpaid only on receipt of this advertisement and $1. by C. I. Hood Co., proprietors Hood's Sarsaparilla, Lowell, Mass. (Z.R.)

MEN—SEXTONIQUE NEVER FAILS TO REstore strength to those troubled with nervous, weak, run-down and despondent conditions that undermine good health. Costs nothing if not cured. Write for free book. Cumberland Chemical Co., 22 Berry Block, Nashville, Tenn.

MARRY. THOUSANDS CONGENIAL PEOple, worth from $1,000 to $50,000 seeking early marriage; descriptions, photos, introductions free. Sealed. Either sex. Send no money. Address Standard Cor. Club, Grayslake, Ill.

MEN ON THE DOWN GRADE, REMEMBER we cure varicocele, stricture, chronic, nervous, blood, kidney, bladder and private diseases. Book symptom blank and advice free, sealed. Hinze Medical Institute, 32 Washington Ave. So., Minneapolis, Minn.

YOUNG SOLDIER, 26 YEARS OF AGE, INdustrious, sober, intelligent, and assigned to domestic service, desires the acquaintance of a refined young lady of some means, object matrimony. Write P. O. Box 221, Montgomery, Ala.

A LETTER TO DR. ROWE, THE SPECIAList, brings his serial No. 1 on varicocele, stricture & urinary diseases; every man should have it. Postage 4c. Send to day. Dr. Rowe, 112 North Pearl St., Buffalo, N. Y.

THOUSANDS ANXIOUS TO MARRY. WORTH $1,000 to $300,000. Confidential descriptions free in plain, sealed envelope. Satisfaction guaranteed. Peoples Agency, Box 4, San Diego, California.

FOR SPEEDY MARRIAGE, BEST, LARGEST in country. Established 12 years. Thousands wealthy, confidential descriptions free. Reliable Club, Mrs. Wrubel, Oakland, Calif.

EVERY READER OF THE LEDGER OUGHT to read these ads. Every week splendid chances to make money—to better yourself—to buy, sell or exchange goods or services, are offered here.

MATRIMONIAL PAPER AND DESCRIPtions free. Many wealthy (sealed), pay when married. Langden, 802 Arbor Ave., Dayton, Ohio.

MARRY — FREE PHOTOS, BEAUTIFUL ladies; descriptions and directory; pay when married. New Plan Co., Dept. 21, Kansas City, Mo.

MARRY—MARRIAGE DIRECTORY WITH photos and description free. Pay when married. The Exchange, Dept. 38, Kansas City, Mo.

MAGIC WORDS! AMAZING, SURE METHod of obtaining your desires. Postpaid for dime. Lida Smedley, 141 Miller, Brooklyn, N.Y.

MARRIAGE PAPER FREE; BEST PUBLIcation for sure results; reliable. Eastern Agency, 55, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

JOLLY MAIDEN; WEALTHY; WOULD marry. Everybody write. Stamp for reply. Lillian Sproul, Station H, Cleveland, O.

GET MARRIED—BEST MATRIMONIAL PAper published. Free for stamps. Correspondent, Toledo, Ohio.

CATHOLICS WISHING TO MARRY, WANTing introductions, booklet free. Catholic Correspondence Club, S. D. Grand Rapids, Mich.

EXCELLENT PILES PRESCRIPTION SENT free. Pay if helped. Calacolo Laboratory, 2121 North Nevada, Colorado Springs.

LONELY MAIDEN, 27, WOULD MARRY. Write for picture. Box 150, Syracuse, N. Y.

BECOME U. S. DETECTIVE PATRIOT FREE, sending 25c for "Detecting." Detective Patriots, Rockport, Ind.

37 "WOMAN BEAUTIFUL" ART PHOTOS and catalog all postpaid 25c. Rick Novelty Co., Logansport, Ind.

MARRIAGE PAPER WITH NAMES, ADdresses, photos, descriptions, sealed, 25c, Box 2265, Boston, Mass.

Offer of Free Catarrh Treatment

REPEATED

OWING TO THOUSANDS OF REQUESTS

"Please, Specialist Sproule, won't you repeat that offer you made in Boyce's Weeklies last April? You have cured me of that loathsome Catarrh, and now I want my friends to have the same glorious results. I bless the day I saw your ad in this paper."

So many, many letters like this, have come to me, in reply to my offers of Free Catarrh Treatment, that I have resolved to repeat my offer.

I have been both glad and sad at these letters. Sad because I realized the vast amount of suffering to be relieved and the hopelessness to be overcome; glad because I knew what my treatment would do and that I might be the instrument to bring such joy to the sufferers.

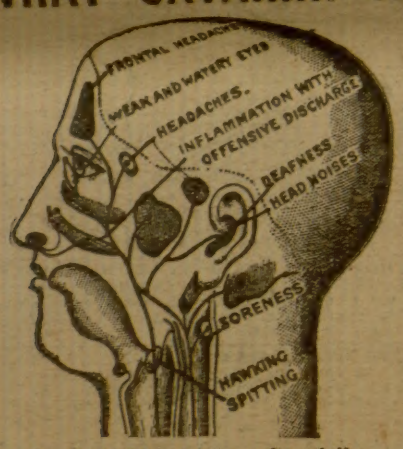
To you who suffer from Catarrh, here is help, freely and gladly offered. Do not think because you have heard that Catarrh was incurable, that it cannot be cured. Along with the other 20th century conquests, has come the conquering of a disease, which has rendered life miserable for untold millions.

RESTORED HAPPINESS

Listen to this from Rhodesdale, Md.: I am still feeling well in every way, shape and form. I am glad that I wrote you concerning my Catarrh for I feel like a new person since you cured me of that terrible disease. I cannot say too much about what you did for me. I am in the best of health and both looking and feeling fine. I can truly recommend you to anyone who wishes to be cured of Catarrh.
MR. JAMES D. COLLISON.

Would'nt you like to be in the condition this man is? Here is your opportunity. Send for a Free Catarrh Treatment.

WHAT CATARRH IS



Look At This Picture Carefully

You see those black patches; those are the cavities in the head in which the germs of Catarrh lodge and multiply, until you can see how easily your head becomes a mass of festering sores inside.

Little wonder that your head aches, that your eyes are weak and watery, that the discharge from the nose has the awful odor of decay, of which you are many times unconscious, because the germs have attacked the nerves of smell.

Then follow the picture down; see the ear tubes attacked, with Deafness and Head Noises resulting; then the throat passages with the soreness and scratchiness, and the incessant hawking and spitting of slimy mucus, which is almost unbearable to the onlookers, be they friends or foes of yours.

A TERRIBLE DANGER

And then when you have seen these things, you must stop and think of the germs eating their way into the cells of the lungs, until the Great White Plague —Consumption— has gripped one more victim with its relentless arms.

Moreover, Consumption is not the only deadly disease started by Catarrh; there are others which progress even more insidiously. That horrible mucus which sticks in your throat by day, slowly works its way down when you sleep, and the droppings make their way into the lungs and to the stomach and through the system.

MY NEW 3-FOLD TREATMENT

TO BE GIVEN AWAY AGAIN

Just glance at that picture again and you will see the necessity of a 3-fold treatment. and wonder why it has not been used long before this. When you receive one of these free treatments, you will see how every detail has been carefully worked out, — — how conscientfously every part has been thought out and put together. In brief, if you are a thinking man or woman, you will realize that the 3-fold form is the only proper form for the treatment of Catarrh.

Remember that wherever a mucous membrane, like that which lines the nose and throat, is found, you have a fertile breeding place for Catarrh germs, once they have gained a foothold in the system. Since there are very few spots in the body where this membrane is not found, you can see the risk you run. If you have Catarrh, you need my new 3-fold treatment. It has cured where all others have failed, and what it has done for others it can do for you.

My treatment has been able to attain wonderful results. I have worked over it for the last 30 years. I gave up the position of Surgeon in the British Royal Mail Naval Service to devote myself to the study of Catarrh. That disease has been my specialty. and I am glad indeed to be able to offer to the American people the results of my years of experience. That the treatment has been appreciated, has stirred my heart to the depths, and I am more than glad to make this announcement again — — —

For a short time I will give away, Free, my new 3-fold Catarrh Treatment.

In Response to the Thousands of Requests From Friends of my Cured Patients

SEND FOR IT TODAY

Don't wait but write today. All you have to do is to write a post card or note. Address it to Catarrh Specialist Sproule, 306 Trade Building, Boston. By return mail you will receive one of these free treatments. Seeing is believing. If you have Catarrh, I want to help you — cure you — and this is why I offer to send you a Free Treatment at your request.

I know what it will mean to you to be rid of all your dull headaches and stupid feelings; to breathe clearly and be rid forever of that loathsome mucus in your nose and throat, the repulsiveness of which the Doctor and the well are even more aware than the victim.

Don't suffer with Catarrh — don't walk around with a burden of disease. Just write for my treatment for Catarrh. Remember this is Free. It won't cost you but the two cents for a postal. It is the same offer which I made before, and of which hundreds availed themselves, and are now well.

See those four grateful people in the next column. Wouldn't you give a good deal to be in their shoes? I offer you the means to get there. Get your pen and ink, or a pencil if handy, write your request "Please send me your Treatment for Catarrh Free." Sign your full name and address, and put my address on it. Drop in the mail box, and then as quickly as the post will bring it, you will receive one of these New Treatments which has done so much for so many other Catarrh sufferers. Write today to

CATARRH SPECIALIST SPROULE

(Graduate Dublin University, formerly Surgeon British Royal Mail Naval Service)

306 TRADE BUILDING, BOSTON, MASS.

IF YOU COULD SEE THE LETTERS—

in my office, in answer to those other offers of mine, you would be surprised and glad. From all over the country, from rich and poor, young and old, have come letters of grateful thanks for the wonderful benefits received. The patients I gained through that advertisement in your paper, are no longer patients but grateful friends.

Because my heart goes out to those afflicted with Catarrh, and because the testimonials I receive every day convince me more and more that my New Treatment is the one to stem the ravages of the disease, I am making this free offer again, at a great cost of money and time.

Don't hesitate to take advantage of this offer, but write at once. I shall hope to soon add your name to my long list of cured friends.

Four Grateful People

Mrs. H. Lansing Elwood

Mr. Emil Lange

ENJOYING THE BEST OF HEALTH

57 Main St., St. Johnsville, N. Y.
Dear Doctor:—
I am still enjoying the best of health and I thank you very much for all the good your treatment did for me. I have no more trouble with my throat, no more hawking up of mucus, none of that tired, run-down feeling I had before you treated me. I know that by taking your remedies in time I was saved much misery, and I shall always be grateful to you for the good health you restored to me.
Very sincerely your friend and patient,
MRS. H. LANSING ELWOOD.

CURED OF CATARRH

39 Monroe St., Silver Creek, N. Y.
Dear Doctor:—
It is nine years now since you treated me for Catarrh and I have had no return of the disease since. My appetite is good, bowels regular, and I can breathe freely through my nose all the time. No more pains and aches. No more bother with my eyes. I thank your treatment for being the strong healthy man I am today, and now that I am married, with my own home and our little baby girl, I appreciate all the more the wonderful good you did me. My wife and I count you as one of our best friends, although we never saw you.
With all best wishes, I am,
Your grateful friend,
EMIL LANGE.

Mrs. Lizzie Carson

Mr. Benj. S. Clarke

WONDERFUL CURE

2730 Boulevard Place, Indianapolis, Ind.
My Dear Dr. Sproule:—It seems almost foolish to try to express in words the good that your wonderful remedies have accomplished. After using your treatment I can say that I am well, yes, EXCEEDINGLY WELL, better than I have been for twenty-five years. I could write volumes, if space would allow, for the good you have done for me can never be fully known only to myself. I consider my cure a marvel. MRS. LIZZIE CARSON.

CATARRH CURED

LETTER FROM MR. BENJAMIN S. CLARKE.
Thurman, Colorado.
"Dear Friend:—I take pleasure in writing you in regard to my case of Catarrh. I feel well and strong. I do not take cold so readily. I have a good appetite and I do not tire with my work now as I did before. I believe your treatment will do all you claim for it. I waited to see if the disease would return but it has not returned. I am perfectly cured to stay cured."

If for any reason you failed to take advantage of Catarrh Specialist Sproule's offer in our April issue, don't fail to write for Catarrh Treatment Free, now. We know the Specialist intimately, and we unhesitatingly recommend him to every one of our readers. Write to him and you will see why his name is a loved household word all over America.